

Introduction:

- We are on the topic of Marriage and Family.
 - With the kids: One God, Love Him, Love each other, work through the pain, be a grace based family, Live and create a spiritual heritage.
 - second week: Maintaining my awareness of eternity helps me establish holiness and endurance in my life.
- As in most churches the topic of marriage and cultivating a marriage will conjure up all kinds of feelings inside people. Some have great marriages, others rocky, still others are divorced, remarried, and we have singles who are looking to be married.
- The Biblical description of marriage is paradise on earth. Let's look at some supporting scriptures.
 - *"Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered."* (1 Peter 3:7, ESV)
 - *"He who finds a wife finds a good thing and obtains favor from the Lord."* (Prov 18:22, ESV)
 - *"Your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your house; your children will be like olive shoots around your table."* (Psalm 128:3, ESV)
 - *"Let your fountain be blessed, and rejoice in the wife of your youth, a lovely deer, a graceful doe. Let her breasts fill you at all times with delight; be intoxicated always in her love."* (Proverbs 5:18-19, ESV)
- What do you remember about the anvil? The hammer? The pounding? or that the anvil is where the metal is shaped. Men, each one of the scriptures I read begins with you. I hope you caught that. Think of all the great marriages you are aware of, I believe you will find a strong loving husband at the helm. Not always but probably 99.9% of the time.

I. Maintaining My Awareness of Eternity

- A. I heard Bill Johnson say recently in a video that Kelly and I watched, *"My holiness and endurance are based on my awareness of eternity."* Your level of holiness and endurance will shape your home, build your family and leave you a legacy. But you have to be willing to pull yourself up onto the anvil. Your holiness and endurance will shape your home.
- B. A man who is aware of eternity or the presence of God in his home will build that home according to the plan of God. How do we do that? Review:...
 1. Dt 6:4: One God. Love Him. Love others.
 2. How do I maintain that awareness?
 - a) Daily devotions - read the word, believe the promises, shape your character.
 - b) Pray. Have a prayer journal. Write your prayers. Create prayer lists. Pray the will of God into wife, children and family. Set reminders in your phone.
 - c) Write down answers to prayer.
 - d) Worship - learn so choruses that you like. Have it playing in your house.
 - e) Journey with another brother.
 3. Surrender to God is a starting point if you have not done that.
- C. Fight for the right thing guys! Your marriage, and your children. Awareness of presence.

Part 2 of message begins here:

II. Life on the Anvil

- A. Home is the anvil of life where learning to love and serve others is hammered out. Ie. Two little boys were sitting at the table arguing who would get the first pancake. The mom said to the older boy, "Why don't you be Jesus and give your little brother the first pancake." The boy was quiet for a moment and said to his little brother, "I'll let you be Jesus first."
1. Love and service being hammered out.
 2. Learning to love in the home is where the "rubber meets the road."
 3. If you can do it there you can love and serve anywhere.
 - a) Husbands listen to this: *"Who is more important, the one who sits at the table or the one who serves? The one who sits at the table, of course. But not here! For I am among you as one who serves."* (Luke 22:27, NLT)
 - b) Teach your children how to be great. That is what this nation needs! More servants in political offices and less entitled.
- B. Marriage does not cause problems it reveals problems in two individual lives that have not been dealt with.
1. It pulls out selfishness and other character flaws. We can live with our own flaws just fine but not with others who point them out. We do not need a change of partners but a change in partners. Ie. How to recognize selfishness...FB selfies.
 2. If you change partners you will still be bringing the same flaws with you. You let God change you and He will work to change your partner.
 3. We don't realize how selfish we are until we are occupying space with another person.
 - a) Most wives don't realize what kind of Godzilla they have married until they see the pressure is on.
 - b) IE. Baby wakes up at 2 a.m. They look at each other 'Aarrgh'!
 - c) Or the wife says *"Honey I scratched the front fender today. If you want to see it it is in the trunk."*
- C. Marriages reveal our disillusioned expectations. Expectations have to go on the anvil.
1. Ie. That beautiful creature that meticulously put on make up and kept herself for you is suddenly in the shadow of the dawn full of curlers, face matted with cream, 10 year old faded pjs...and Godzilla, he realizes he married an alien swamp creature.
 2. Ladies to give you some insight. IE. Your mans description of the ideal wife: Able to paint, fix car, cook, love only you, quiet, cleans the house, and hates charge cards. What he really gets... *"She speaks 140 words/minute with gusts unto 180. Where there is smoke she is cooking, she lets you know you have only two faults, everything you says, and everything you do. The last time she used a broom was to fly somewhere. She fights the neighbors for practice until you get home."* Gary Greenwald
 3. Do you know what an anvil is? It is a thing on which something metal is hammered out.
 - a) The hammer is never meant to hurt you; it is to shape you.
 - b) Guys when you feel like you are being hammered on, at home. Remember God is shaping you to be the loving husband he called you to be. The man of God He has called you to be.

- c) Loving each other well takes work! Hard work!
- 4. First you have to heat things up really hot.
 - a) (this is not tempers... it is the intentionality of walking in love when you do not feel like it). You can get burned when things are hot. Handle with care.
 - b) (When it is hot that is perfect condition) Then you start hammering the metal into a specific shape. God calls this the potters wheel in scripture. Jer 18:1-ff. He shapes us.
 - c) *"Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her,"* (Ephesians 5:25, ESV) Men, this is what God is after in us. Be like Jesus!
- D. Ladies have disillusioned expectations too.
 - 1. They want their husbands to be providers so they never have any financial pressures. Someone who cooks, does dishes, laundry, cuddles every night. Brings their coffee in the morning. They want a husband so like God that Jesus gets jealous!
 - 2. Some women want Jesus for a husband. "I am married to Jesus!"
 - a) One husband said to me, "What do I do? I can't compete with Jesus.
 - b) A second husband said to me, "My wife says she done with me and is now married to Jesus." He laughed and said, "That is male bovine excrement! I live with her and Jesus would never marry a woman like that."
 - c) Ladies, I invite you to get up on the anvil and be shaped by God. It is worth it.
 - 3. The potter is always at work with the clay. The clay can't create something beautiful but it can be made into something beautiful. Same with the blacksmith.

III. As For Me And My House Josh. 24:15 We will serve the Lord.

- A. This is a together commitment. Commitment to doing life together.
- B. Clear communication skills. Speak and listen. Hear and understand.
- C. My house will be a safe place. A safe place is a place to:
 - 1. Share dreams without being laughed at.
 - 2. Be honest about struggles- I'm afraid, I hurt, I am struggling with.
 - 3. Share feelings and pain when it hurts.
 - 4. To Work Through Pain. This means we will not:
 - a) Deny the pain is there.
 - b) Hide the pain.
 - c) Ignore the pain.
- D. The typical family does not do this well.
 - 1. When you do not process pain well as a family, you are setting your family up to be 'numbers' their pain.
 - 2. People numb pain with sex, drugs, alcohol, food. Temporary pain killers, eventually kill.
- E. Christian families must learn to process pain.
 - 1. Acknowledge when pain is there. "My heart is hurting."
 - 2. Bring the pain into the open. Speak it. "Your words hurt me." "My heart was hurt when you said/did..." "I am afraid." There has to be a safe place for this to be done. I cant fear that you will laugh, rebuke or make fun of me, or blow it off. If you do, I will not share. I will remain in silence and you will never get to know me.

3. Pay attention to pain. **Pain is a sign that something is wrong.** It hurts for a reason. If your heart is hurting there is a reason. Ie. Rock in shoe. Blister.
- F. Do this together as a family. Minister to one another's hurts and needs. So much unity comes when this happens. Ie. The Lion with a thorn in his paw. (Androcles and the Lion: Aesop Fables.) The boy takes it out and they are friends forever. Parents what happens when you help those little tigers God has given you and you remove their thorn? Unity, loyalty, family.
- G. If your spirit gets crushed through life's pain and adversities, you will find yourself depressed and weakened. Rejection and loneliness will fill the void or anger and rebellion.
- H. How to walk it out.
 1. Go first to God / His word. Be honest with Him. "God my heart hurts."
 2. Ask yourself, "Am I at fault in any way." If necessary seek and extend forgiveness.
 3. Be willing to take responsibility and not move into a victim mentality
 4. If necessary talk with a mature trusted person. Ask for continued prayer for healing and comfort
 5. 2 Cor 1:3-4 God comforts us so we can reach out to others who need comfort. Paul is telling the Corinthians you can work this into the whole group.

Conclusion:

- Learn to love the anvil! It is where God shape us.
- Invitation.
- Great decree from Jane Hamon: *"I am bought by the covenantal Blood of Jesus and cannot be cursed. Therefore, I take authority over every demonic assignment against me, my family, my ministry, my business or my God-ordained leadership role. I break every assignment of an Athaliah-type spirit and decree that Jesus is my true King, and I will serve Him only. I declare that I am in covenant with God and will be the intercessor, reformer, watchman and warrior He has called me to be. I receive fresh fire from Heaven so I can complete my assignments and fulfill my destiny, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ."*