

*Father once again we have come together in Your name, Oh Father be with us, speak to us. O Father the entrance of Your Word brings light. Help us to walk in that light. As the days grow darker and darker oh Lord, we need more of Your light, we need more of Your power, we need more of Your love, we need more of Your mercy and we need more of Your grace. Every time we come together Father, cover us with Your grace. We need it Lord. We realize how helpless we are without You. Help us to stand firm in these last days, unshaken by all that is happening around us. Help us to keep our hearts steadfast in You and in Your word. Speak to us oh Lord. For in Jesus name we pray. Amen.*

Let's go back to Genesis. We are looking at Isaac, we will move from Isaac to two verses in *Genesis 26:34-35*,

### **Genesis 26:34-35**

***<sup>34</sup> When Esau was forty years old, he took as wives Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite. <sup>35</sup> And they were a grief of mind to Isaac and Rebekah.***

We saw a couple of weeks back that Isaac was moving in Beersheba, suddenly we shall go into his house – his elder son. Remember Isaac has two sons and they are twins. Same father, same mother, twins. Suddenly when Esau is forty years old he decides to get married. And Scripture says, ***he took as wives Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite.*** And then Scripture says, ***<sup>35</sup> And they were a grief of mind to Isaac and Rebekah.***

This world is full of grieving homes, whether Christian homes or non-Christian homes, homes are full of grief. This grief is connected with the choices people in the home have made. And we all have made wrong and terrible choices. Remember, choices are made based on what we value. The very purpose of parenting is to teach the children what to value and to make right choices. The world can only give us information but the place for values is the home and the church. In *Deuteronomy 6:1-9* God talks about His actual order.

### **Deuteronomy 6:1-9**

***<sup>1</sup> "Now this is the commandment, and these are the statutes and judgments which the LORD your God has commanded to teach you, that you may observe them in the land which you are crossing over to possess, <sup>2</sup> that you may fear the LORD your God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments which I command you, you and your son and your grandson, all the days of your life, and that your days may be prolonged. <sup>3</sup> Therefore hear, O Israel, and be careful to observe it, that it may be well with you, and that you may multiply greatly as the LORD God of your fathers has promised you—'a land flowing with milk and honey.'<sup>[a]</sup> <sup>4</sup> "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one!<sup>[b]</sup> <sup>5</sup> You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. <sup>6</sup> "And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. <sup>7</sup> You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. <sup>8</sup> You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. <sup>9</sup> You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.***

This was God's original law and then He says that the real education is based on God's word. And He symbolically says, ***"let it be there before your eyes and on your hand."*** But let it be there first in your heart. Let the word of God be in your heart, before your eyes and then it will determine your action. The devil will also come through the same system. He wants our heart. He can't get our heart initially, so he tries to get our minds, and then he will get our actions and finally he will get our hearts. So God has said let it be before your eyes and let it determine your action. So when the end comes there is a set of people who have given their hearts to him and they will take his mark (Satan's mark) on their hands and forehead.

So few Sundays back we looked at the message about the spirit of the mark of the Beast. We don't want to look at the mark, but the spirit behind the mark is already there. That is what controls your mind and then will control your actions. God has said let it be My word that controls your mind because that will determine your action and the choices you make.

## Build your life and Build your home

So in this real life story you will see two young men of the same age in the house of a Godly father and a Godly mother yet their ways are wrong. Both their ways are wrong. Esau didn't care for the ways of God. He is a man what we would call, 'a man who makes choices based on his feelings.' In English we have two terms – Senses and Sensuality. He is a man who makes decision according to his senses. And when he is hungry what matters to him is the hole in his stomach and he will give up anything to satisfy it.

The danger of our senses is that if our senses control us then what our senses want at that time can become so powerful that we have no ability control it. I have over and over heard and counseled people over the years, people who didn't actually need it, didn't have the money for it, yet when they went into the shopping mall, bought something with their credit card and then ran into lakhs of loan for years together. The very credit card is designed to feed your senses. Not the debit card, the money goes from your account. Credit card goes from the money you don't have. So people use credit card to fulfill their senses.

Birthright is something that Esau would inherit years later. So his birthright was not a debit card but a credit card. Does he have it? No he does not have it. He sold something he did not have to fulfill something he wanted then. One thing you need to know about the credit cards is that if you don't pay it off then, the interest rate is very high. The interest just keeps going up. Esau will realize it later that the interest on it is very high. But Esau doesn't care. Somehow Jacob knew. We don't know how he knew.

There are two children in the womb. God only says there are two nations, there is a struggle, the elder will serve the younger. That's all God says. He doesn't say anything after that. All is told much later. He doesn't say anything else. The elder will serve the younger that's all He says, He doesn't say "**Esau I hate Jacob I love.**" All that He doesn't say. He only says that the elder will serve the younger. There are two Sammys here, one older the Sammy, one the younger Sammy. If suddenly God says younger Sammy will become Pastor and the older Sammy will become an elder that doesn't mean anything. Is that a curse? No. It's not a curse. Both can serve God. Positionally it will be different, that's all is said. But that's not the way it plays out. That is God's call and that is God's choice and if both of them walked according to their call the rewards they get will be the same. Your rewards in heaven are based upon your faithfulness according to the call. If the call and the purpose of God is for the elder to serve the younger and if he (the elder) serves faithfully, he will not loose his reward. But for the parents the children are same. God's call over our children may be different but for the parents, the love for the children is the same. God's call upon my life and Pastor John's life is different but He loves us the same way. He doesn't love us differently.

But Isaac and Rebecca loved their children differently. Rebecca's heart is now all tied up with Jacob and Isaac loved Esau. *Genesis 25:28* gives us the reason which is very strange.

### Genesis 25:28

<sup>28</sup> ***And Isaac loved Esau because he ate of his game, but Rebekah loved Jacob.***

It doesn't give any reason. It only says, 'Rebecca loved Jacob'. And I believe it is connected with Jacob's call or call of God on Jacob's life. She knew that and because of that she loved him. But it doesn't work that way. If the call of God is upon one child, you don't love that child more. And Isaac's love for Esau is connected with meat. That is how seeds of discord are sown at homes. It is called partiality. Lot of seeds of discord are sown in houses and much more in Indian houses. Because we see that there is a partiality towards sons (in India). Though both sons and daughters are children, our dreams are tied up with our sons. I'm not saying it is wrong, but to love them differently is wrong. That is what is wrong. You cannot love your children differently.

Esau will go ahead with his choices that are always based on feelings. He is a very impulsive character. I'm not saying he is a bad guy. Actually if you were to walk with Esau you will like him. He is the kind of person in the world who is very impulsive and suddenly comes and says, 'Come macha (meaning dude), let us go for a drink and I will pay for it.' 'Let us go to IMAX and I will buy you a ticket.' And the world likes guys like that. Jacob is a cold and calculating character. If you call Jacob for anything he will calculate. Honestly, you won't like characters like Jacob. The problem is people like Esau don't reach anywhere in God's Kingdom. So the next time you will see that Esau is getting married. He goes ahead and marries not one

but two Canaanite women. He is the kind of guy in the world who believes, 'if one is good, two is better.' And Scripture says, 'Immediately, the home, the household is a mess'.

Remember, most of our messes are a result of the choices we have made. You can't blame anybody. Many of the messes when we look back into our lives, we will see, were made by us. So understand in life, because most of you are young people, remember you will make lots of choices. And often much of your choices are based on information you receive. And you need to realize most of the most famous universities, Harvard University, Yale, Princeton, they were all seminaries first. They started to teach young men to preach the Word of God. Now these same universities have become the most anti-God schools of learning. Where do you get your information from? School, College, T.V, Newspapers? All this is where you get your information from and the Church becomes the place where you have to receive truth. Because people in the world will make choices based on the information they receive from so many sources. We do not make choices based on information; we make choices based on truth. So Church becomes the place where the Word of God the truth of God is taught. When you go to a science class, you are taught theory and after that they will take you to the lab. So the Bible is full of theory, and the lives of the people are recorded to show what happened in the lab of their lives. Those who succeeded were the ones who received and applied the truth of God and those who failed and made a mess were the ones who stepped outside the truth of God. If I am right in *Romans 15:4*

**Romans 15:4**

***<sup>4</sup>for whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.***

Everything was written for our learning. If it was only theory, God just had to give us The Ten Commandments, The Book of Leviticus and the first few chapters of Romans and said this is the Bible. That's not how the Bible is. It's full of stories of people and their failures. He gives us truth and He gives us lives, to show us the choices people made and where those choices led them. Remember, all of you, all of you young people will have to make choices about your relationships, about your career, about entertainment - how you will entertain yourself, about purchases - what you will buy and what you will not buy. How will you make those choices? Will you make it based on senses? Some people make choices based on sensuality. Materialism is by which some others make choices. Selfishness is by which some others make choices. Selfishness means, 'This is what I want' and not what God wants. Let me explain to you. A boy looks at a girl and thinks she is very pretty and decides, 'you know what that's the one I want to marry'. It is just senses. A girl looks at a boy and says, 'you know what he's got a good job and a good house and a good car' and says, and 'I think I want to marry a boy like that'. It is not senses, it is materialism. The world will tell you, 'you are making a very wise choice.' A third person might think I don't care what anybody thinks, I will marry the person I want. He or she maybe good looking or may not be good looking. I will make my decision and nobody has a say in it. In this decision, there may be sensuality, there may be materialism but basically at the core of it, it is selfishness.

Esau decided at 40, I am going to get married. He went and got married. Scripture says, 'It was a source of grief for the home'. Ultimately, it was not Esau's failure. It was a failure of the parents - Isaac and Rebecca.

When Isaac was 40, his father had made a very godly decision about his marriage. Though his mother was dead and Abraham was alone he was very careful about whom his son should marry. We have looked at that in *Genesis 24* long back. And Abraham very wisely in a godly manner picked a very godly wife for his son. Now Isaac and Rebekah were two godly parents, but because their hearts were divided about their children there was discord in the house. Now when the sons turned 40 they should have, like their Father (Abraham), decide that it is time for them to get married. Don't look at the story in the Bible. That is God making a message out of their mess. Do you know for 20 years when they did not have any children there was no discord in the family? All that is written is that they prayed and they waited. Then the children came. Once the children came their hearts were in two directions.

Let us rewind their lives. Let us change their life around. Isaac is 60 for 20 years he has prayed. And now God answers the prayer. They have twins and it is heard, the elder shall serve the younger. Isaac and Rebekah love both the children and they bring them both in the ways of the Lord. Now Isaac is 100, Esau and Jacob are 40 years old. Isaac and Rebekah pray and they say our sons should not marry from anywhere else. Let us call the steward from our house and send him to our Father's house. We are just imagining ok. That steward goes back, he goes to Laban's house and he finds Laban has two

daughters. Rebekah has two sons and he puts his case before them and he brings them home. Leah marries Esau, Rachel marries Jacob. Will there be any division in that home? Will there be any chaos? Leah would have had her children, Jacob would have had his 12 children, Israel would have come of Israel alone. The elder would have served the younger; the younger would have loved and respected the elder. The plans and purposes of God would have gone forward without any chaos. And Isaac would have maintained the peace in the house. Because when Jacob married Rachel and Esau married Leah Isaac would have been 100 and by the time Isaac dies he was 180 years old meaning all the children are grown up and the grandfather is still alive and maintains the peace of the house. A Reuben would have never slept with his Father's concubine because there was no concubine. A Joseph would have never been put in the well because they were all sons of the same Father and mother.

The things which we see (the actual story) nothing would have happened. Because God's plans are always good and perfect. Most of us miss that perfect walk. So most of the time God is trying to turn our mess around and we get mad with God instead of getting mad at ourselves. That is why choices are so important. That's why these choices are there in the Bible. So we have to consider our choices. Most of you are young. One of the most important decisions you will ever make in your life is your marriage. And even the best marriage which is between a godly man and a godly woman, after the wedding, it has to be lived out. Because things will change when the children come. Things were okay before the children came. Once the children come things will change. That is one of the main reasons why God says do not be yoked with unbelievers. And I've seen this over and over. Believing girl married an unbelieving boy or a believing boy married an unbelieving girl. Things are usually ok until the kids come. He very lovingly allows her to go to Church, drops her and picks her from the Church. You do whatever you want. Go for meetings, everything is ok until the children start coming. Once the children start coming then they will say, 'you can go, leave the children here'. You are not dedicating that child, that child is not going to church. That child will not sit with you when you are praying. That's when the problem comes. Therefore connected with the home God says be very careful whom you marry. Because one of the primary purposes of marriage, when God institutes marriage, is to be fruitful and multiply. Very rarely do you hear a couple say we want to get so badly married but we don't want children. One of the primary purposes of marriage is that out of that marriage a godly offspring will come. So God says be very careful with the choices you make. Let it not be based on your senses. Let it not be a selfish decision, because when the next generation comes each one of you will take your role in your home. Because one of the first things that fails in an unequal marriage when the children come is discipline. Discipline goes. Scriptural discipline is not possible. Children have to be disciplined in love and consistently and that goes for a toss. Discipline is what brings order. In any form of life, discipline is absolutely necessary if you want order. And when it comes to God's discipline Father and mother have to agree. If one parent doesn't agree, do you know what David says in *Psalm 51*?

**Psalm 51:5**

<sup>5</sup> ***Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me.***

What does that mean? The baby that is born is in the absolute fallen nature. There is a believing parent, there is an unbelieving parent. He is born to naturally go the other way. He will not, as he grows up, listen to the believing parent. If it is written, 'I was both brought forth in holiness and in righteousness my mother conceived me,' then he is tuned to the godly parent. So you know what happens? When you and I marry an unbelieving spouse we have already sold away the destiny of our children. Now to get them into the Kingdom it will cost us a heavy price. Only we can hope for the mercy of God to intervene in their lives. Remember children. Marriage is not just about you. God is not called the God of Abraham. He is called the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob and the God of Israel. He is also the God of our children, our grandchildren and our great grandchildren. If that has to happen be very careful whom you marry. Because Isaac and Rebekah have their own favorites and in the family you will see that discipline has gone out the window. And you will see, if you read the text very closely, Esau listens to the voice of his Father, Jacob listens to the voice of his mother - even to deceive his father.

You read the entire account, if I am right you will never hear in the entire Genesis account Rebekah saying one word to Esau. I'm not saying that she never spoke to Esau, but scripture never records it. You will see her conversation with Jacob is only recorded. And you will see Isaac's conversation with Jacob only when he comes and sees him. Do you know why it is put that way? Though both parents spoke to both children, when Scripture records it that way it basically tells you which voice of which parent had an influence in their life. Isaac spoke into Esau's life; Rebecca spoke into Jacob's life. That's not parenting.

Parenting is when the father and the mother in one voice speak to their children. They don't speak in two voices. Because parents are like transmitters, they are passing not only the discipline but also the voice of God into the lives of their children. So they don't have two voices, they have one voice. Therefore God says, "Do not be unequally yoked." because you will speak with differing voices to your children." Instead of unity you will create disunity. You will never be able to really set boundaries for children. Rules are basically boundaries. That's what rules are.

If the father sets a rule, when the father is away, the mother breaks it. If the mother sets a rule, the father breaks it. I've seen it with my own eyes over and over again. I remember a family here in Hyderabad. Father and mother were fighting like crazy. Mother believes, but the father doesn't. The son doesn't listen at all and to get back at the mother, to this boy who is in school, the father gives him a five hundred rupee note and says, "Go do what you want." Is it a wonder that the boy ends up as an alcoholic? Now these are extreme cases but these are not rare cases. God says the man and his wife should complement each other, but instead there is competition. It becomes politics. In democracy you always know, that whoever gets the maximum votes is considered the winner. So do you know what actually happens? Homes become places of politics where the parents are now trying to buy their children. What goes out is the will of God and the discipline of God.

It is no longer possible to set boundaries, because in homes, boundaries have to be set. From the time they are small onwards the consequences of their actions should very clearly explained. And consequences have to be enforced when they break. And the child actually grows up learning to make right choices. It realizes that choices have consequences.

Do you know where it all begins? It begins at the wedding, then working out the marriage, like salvation, with fear and trembling, because there are children involved. What is the first thing that goes out? Discipline goes out. We are just looking at a few things so that when you get married, when you have your home, you will know exactly how to go about it, slowly, one day at a time. Now I'm not giving it in that order. Another thing is resources, which is called money. Here remember, it is the birth right. It doesn't matter how much you love each other, to live you need money. I have never found a couple who filled their mouth and their stomach with love, they filled it with food. Because people have this tremendous confidence that when they fall in love that, 'we will be able manage.' It doesn't work. Money doesn't come from love, it comes with hard work.

So understand resources. Believing couples and Believing children, understand resources. I'll give you a simple equation to start with.  $1+1+8=10$ . To start  $10+10+80=100$ . If you have a hundred rupees, ten goes to God straight up. Ten you put away, live on eighty. Then as God prospers you, change the equation. Increase what you give to God, put away more, and spend less on yourself. That is a very good equation to start. Start that with your children. If you are used to the habit of giving your children pocket money, remember, if they get hundred rupees a month, ten rupees has to go to church, ten rupees into the piggy bank and then they are allowed to spend eighty if they want. If you are parents sitting here, one thing I will tell you parents. When your children are growing up, family is normal, let finances be very open. If the children know how much comes in and how much is being spent, they are learning managing right at the beginning, because often parents struggle and the children have no idea about it. And often children grow and become ungrateful because they were ignorant of their parent's wealth. If your children know you have hundred rupees, ten has gone, ten has gone, you have to live on eighty, then they will not come and ask you buy me this for fifty rupees. This is how you bring financial discipline into the home. It is not done by telling the child first, when you go to a shopping mall, "No you can't have it." It is by knowing the resources in the home, when you go, the child knows, "I know I can't have it." Very rarely will you have to say no to a child who has been brought up that way. Do you know why? Because the child is already growing up to make choices based on information.

Once that is established and they see in your home how money is being spent and how value system is also established then they will find there is lot of joy in giving than in receiving. What we learn at church has to be lived at home. It is not your money or my money; it is not even our money. It is God's money given to us for a purpose. That is established in the home. The owner of this money is God. And he has the right to tell us how to spend it. That even what is saved, you always have to tell them, that it is saved on one condition that if God says "Release", we release. Though you may tell your children that when the time of Marriage comes we will use it only on one condition that God won't spend it before that. If that is established there is no selling or stealing of birth rights.

## Build your life and Build your home

In our times, there is fighting over ancestral property. Why do Christian homes fight over property? In Jacob and Esau's struggle, both Jacob and Esau have no idea, about the Messiah the coming of Jesus Christ. They are fighting for the birth right because the first fellow gets double the property. Jacob is the fellow who is looking after the sheep and goats so he knows exactly how many goats and sheep his father has. If his father has hundred sheep he knows Esau will get sixty and he will get thirty. So he is thinking sheep. What is Esau? Esau is not interesting in sheep, he is interested in deer. So Jacob says, "Give me your birthright", he says, "Take my birthright, give me lentils." Understand what is happening? Later he realizes O my God, what did I lose? He understands the spiritual significance of it, but by then it is too late. Why did the problem arise? The problem arose because the value system was not established in the home. You have to establish that in your homes. These are all value systems and when our children grow up and go out they will still carry it with them.

I have got two kids, whatever struggles they may have with their faith, when it came to money they are absolutely clear. Till today they have never taken ten rupees. They won't even ask. If they are given fifty, they will return twenty. 'Only thirty is what I need at school', they'll say. One child is in the other end of the world. One thing I don't have to worry. I worry about all other things, 'Lord, don't let her get a boyfriend', 'Lord, let her not smoke', 'Lord, let her not drink.' I never have to worry about how she spends her money. Never. She goes into the supermarket and just as she has been trained, checks all the labels. Checks the prices and buys only what is required, within the budget. Her eldest brother has been in New York City for twenty six years. Still goes by car. Doesn't know how to travel any other way. This child goes from here (India) to there (USA) and in one week, she has learned how to travel through the city by train because her father had taught her that is the cheapest mode of transport. Takes the phone uses Google map finds the train points and goes through a city which is so huge and she is never lost. It does help. Training does help. So, when you go to some places, you are always confident, you know this is what you were taught and when you walk in that way there is surety in it. These are all different things. You don't have to worry. God says, if this is established, financial value system is what you take into this world. You will never live beyond your means. One thing confident about this thing is that if I take my children to a shopping mall; they will never tell me, buy me that. Never say. You ask them for the birthday, what you want, they will say 'nothing.' Ask their mother who has been to US. Why? Value system there is different. Yet, you look into what they have; almost all they have is actually bought by their father, not by their mother. You know why? Because there is something which God says 'If you walk with Me, I will withhold no good things from you. I will never put you to shame.'

Walking with God doesn't mean we have to walk in khadi. Because people think that if you walk with God, however God is, He will only send khadi from there. We are proving to God, you know what; 'I am a good steward of Your money so that You can trust me with more, and I won't waste it.' Are you getting the picture? Install these disciplines in your home.

Third thing and this has to be done when they are small. I am telling you these are all practicable in homes which are whole. Once the home is broken, it is very difficult. There are two kinds of broken homes. Where the parents are separated or where the parents are together but they are working against each other.

Isaac and Rebecca are living together but working at cross purposes and the house is divided also among the children. That is why the unity of parents is so important to bring unity in the home because if the father and mother are divided, enforcing any of God's rules becomes very difficult. You know what happens? When the home is united, then everybody shares in the work in the house. In our context, do you know what it means? Esau also looks after sheep. Jacob also goes hunting. Esau also stays in the tents some days and Jacob also goes to the open. There is a fair division of work. If Isaac and Rebecca had been united that way, the house wouldn't have been divided. They wouldn't have chosen their children according to their senses. 'Oh, I am an open man, I like venations, this is the son that goes with me.' 'Oh, this is the boy who stays with me'. It wouldn't have been like that. Those are very simple things. Don't make it complicated. Because most of us grew up, many of us are still where we don't have help in our house. Some of us may have, but most of us don't. If the work is divided, it is so easy. Morning, I was telling my church. All the ladies are very happy. Because, men do not believe in India that they should get into the kitchen. They don't believe. Specially, they shouldn't be washing dishes. Low in dignity. I said, can I show you from scripture that men should wash dishes? I also told the ladies, don't take it and run with it. Don't go home tonight and say, it is written, 'Thou shalt wash dishes.' You will suddenly hear your husband say, 'get behind me Satan.' King James Version, *2 Kings 21:13*. This is God saying.

**2 Kings 21:13**

**<sup>13</sup> And I will stretch over Jerusalem the line of Samaria, and the plummet of the house of Ahab: and I will wipe Jerusalem as a man wipeth a dish, wiping it, and turning it upside down.**

Original translation will say man, neutral translation will say anyone. Because all these translators were men. Old days, they did not have gravy like a sambar and a rasam and all; it was dry food, so they wiped it and put the plate down. Did you hear something? Did you see what God says? A man washes his plate, how does he keep it? Upside down. Why, because God knows dust will get into it. How do you keep your plate? Right side down. What does scripture say? Upside down. Ladies in general should learn how to set your table. What does God say? You can share in the work. Teach the children to share in the work. Let me tell you. Never teach the children to share in the work unless the father shares in the work. It doesn't lie with the mother because doesn't matter how much you make your children share the work as the boys grow, they see the father is not doing anything, they will become slowly like the father. When the father does it, then the children cannot say no. They have no scripture, no reason to justify their disobedience. Are you getting the picture? All things are possible only if you believe because we get lot of information from the world which doesn't fit in with scripture. Most men have never seen this scripture. If they saw it they skipped over it. God is actually saying. What did God say? Men do wash dishes. That is a very menial household chore right? If you can then the children are taught to do the same, you know what, life in the home becomes very simple. Especially in today's days when you have so many kinds of machines to make life easy. But, we don't believe in these things. Because we don't believe in these things, these things are not part of our value system and because these things are not in our value system, our children don't believe in it.

When they come to me for counseling- I want to get married. I know they are believers. The first question I ask is- do you know how to cook? Because, most people don't know how to cook. They are all planning to eat out after marriage. They say that after marriage they will learn to cook. Parents are at fault. Indian parents say, 'Don't come into the kitchen. Go, study.' Girls at 20, 23, 24, 25, they don't know how to make tea and coffee also. They are 24 now and when they can't get a job now the mother says, go get into the kitchen and cook. What if they had taught to cook in the beginning? Our young boys don't know how to cook. Whatever they cook, it comes out with one taste.

Do you know how simple life is and how complicated we made it? Why I tell is that this young generation children are always falling ill because they are eating from outside. What we don't understand is, our main purpose. If I have to serve God, God needs my body to serve Him. If the devil is not able to get into me through my eyes and my ears, if I am not disciplined in this area he will still get me through my stomach. Do you know how many men of God because they do not have discipline in these things fall ill before they have to go minister? Remember when Scripture says, 'the devil is like a roaring lion watching whom to devour', he devours through different means. Isaac was devoured by the devil just because of food. Let me ask you this question? When Esau came back from hunting and he was hungry, was he married? Was Jacob married? So why did Esau go to Jacob, why didn't he go to his mother's kitchen to eat? Why is Jacob cooking? Why are they not eating at the same tent at the same table? When did the family table get divided? If they had eaten as a family regularly when he was hungry he would have gone to his mother and said, mommy I am hungry. Would the mother say, give your birth right, then I will give you biryani? Are you getting the picture, there are issues there which are problematic. Where did they arise? These issues have risen because there is a division between the Father and the mother. I will tell you why he was cooking. He was cooking because his mother encouraged him to cook for her. And Isaac encourages Esau to hunt and bring and cook for him. Principles are there in the Bible. Are you getting it? So Esau receives no guidance from his Father, he receives no guidance from his mother. Then why should he seek guidance when he decides to get married? So when he became 40, he went and married whom he wanted. This became a source of grief for the parents. Are you getting the picture? These are principle established for homes for families.

Next principle that you need to realize is this, that when adversity comes and it will come into every home, the family faces adversity together. Adversity can make a home or break a home. Adversity, if the family is founded on right principles, can make a family really strong. The family actually sticks closer and stays closer. How do we handle adversity in homes? Always notice this, homes in which suffering has come and they have endured the suffering together, you are stronger than most homes, because the house has been tested by the winds and the floods. For that the Father and mother have to stay together first and put the children also into the adversity. That is why I say the resources should be open. Often much of our adversity can be handled if your resources are there. When adversity comes and the resources were always open when we have to make difficult decisions it is very easy to take it as a family and not to get the others upset. If the children were

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part of it and brought up that way, when your resources went and you had to move from a two bedroom house to one room the children will say let's move it. You know that's not what happened. Because the children were never aware what do the parents do? They take loan after loan and try to live in that two bedroom. I'm just giving you an illustration because you never learn to handle adversity as a family.

Adversities are handled together as a family; I know many men hide their struggles from their wives. Still in India many wives do not know anything about the financial situation about the home. And they think you don't have to know I am handling it. The wife and the children have no idea how they are handled. And they are not part of it. Often the man is on loans. Living on cards because he is not willing to be open with his family. If he was always open with his family children will say don't send me to that college where the fees is 25000, send me to this, it is only 2000. But I promise you I will study as hard as I would have studied there. Many of the struggles we have brought on ourselves because of the lack of openness. Because family is one unit where we are all stake holders. Because if one failed everybody is hurt, and you need to see family as that. And if that is the way your home has come when adversity comes you are able to face it together. That's why in a home there is no room for pride. Anybody can fail; everybody has to ask for forgiveness. Because only God is right. That is why only Abraham is called the Father of believers. Because he was always willing to humble himself and acknowledge I was wrong. And as homes we learn to depend upon God one day at a time.

Remember the greatest gift we can give our children is not dowry, it is not a house it is not a car, it is not money. It is the day gift of walking by faith with the God you believe. The day your children start to walk by faith, that is the end of your troubles. That is when you know your parenting is over. You have handed from this hand to that hand. You don't have to worry because you know no matter how many times they fail, that hand will take care. But God says because they are small and are walking in flesh and they are children of sight, I have given two people in the home to take them through until you can hand them over to me.

We'll stop there because there is a lot more. I will give you a few but we will look at it next week. Laugh a lot in your home. Home should always be remembered as happy places. In the home always treat each other with respect. Especially when they are young, when they are small spend a lot of time with them. If you ask me today, 'what did your Father give you', I cannot remember one thing. But if you ask me about the time, I can remember exactly all the times he spent with me when I was small. How he taught me to play chess, How he taught me to play football, How he taught me to play badminton, How he taught me a whole lot of stuff. Time spent when they are small, children remember that. When they are teenagers they don't want you. When they grow up they will forget all their teenage years and remember the time they spent with you. Don't be too busy when they are small.

Another rule, at least eat one meal together every day. The family that eats together grows fat together... spiritually. I am giving you general rules ok. When your children grow up, especially when they are teenagers they will have attitudes, that is part of teenage. If they don't have attitude then change their name to Joseph, even Joseph had an attitude. You may not approve their attitude; never ever stop expressing your love for them every day. God doesn't approve of my attitude or your attitude and the very fact you and I are alive today and the sun rose is He is saying, "I love you". These are two different things; love of God and the approval of God are two different things. I tell this to parents, when your children go from your home in the morning, pray, bless and hug them because you do not know whether they will come back. If they have an accident and they die, let them remember, my father and mother hugged me and sent me. They should never die under the wheels of the truck, may that never happen, thinking that he told me, "Get out of my house". Everyday children die but how did they leave their home? Their behavior may have been obnoxious for that it is discipline. God never stops loving you and me; we never stop loving each other and our children. That goes for your spouse too, If the wife is the one who goes first or if husband is the one who goes first, pray and send them, love them and send them. Don't blame God saying that, "I know you will come back". God says, "What is your life? Like vapor, like mist, here today, gone tomorrow". Whoever goes, whoever leaves, let them go with love, let them go with a blessing. God never stops loving us. I will close but there are so many things.

An old man and a young man were travelling in a bus. The old man had a bunch of roses in his hands and it was Valentine's Day, don't pretend you don't all, you all know what Valentine's Day is. So the young man said, "Oh, is that for your wife"? He said "Yes" He looked at the young man and asked, "Do you have a girl whom you love?" and he said "Yes, I am going to meet her, I have a card for her". The old man said, "Good". Then the old man had to get off the next stop, then he looked at



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the young man and he gave him his bunch of roses and he said, "Give it to the girl you love. I am sure my wife won't mind it. She will want you to have it to gift". The young man was surprised, he took it very gratefully, the old man got off then he saw, the old man was walking into the cemetery. He was actually going with roses on Valentine's Day to his wife's grave.

That's why Scripture says, "Love is stronger than death". It is absolutely strong, the devil comes and he creates division. Even in the best of marriages, best marriage in the Bible. Man picked by God, Isaac and Rebecca, twenty years they had perfect marriage and Scripture says, "When a man in the Israelite army, gets married" he is given one year vacation, "go be with your wife." First year of marriage always matters, that's when you bond as a couple. God put it in Israel as law that one year of vacation. Isaac and Rebecca had twenty years of married life to bond together yet their marriage failed. You know why it failed? because they were divided in the marriage over their children. Remember, there is a devil who is watching, he is watching how we are walking. Always trying to create division, that's why the first rule God says about marriage is, "You are not two, you are one". One in decisions, one in unity, one in love, one in finances and one in household work, that oneness goes everywhere. If there is that oneness, what does Scripture say? "Two fold is very strong. Three fold impossible to break". There is a Godly oneness; Jesus comes there in the middle. Are you getting the picture? One day our children will grow up. Esau will grow up, Jacob will grow up, Isaac will look at Rebecca and say, "Who are you"? That's what happens in our homes, the houses are divided because of the children. Ones the children go, two strangers live their life out till they die and that's not marriage. They say, "Marriage is like wine". Don't taste wine, I am just giving an illustration, the older it gets, the better it should be. Watch out, there is an enemy of the marriage; the devil is the enemy, first of the marriage, second of the home. Why? Because God calls his relationship with the Church and with Israel as a marriage and when He talks to us He calls himself as the Father of the home. Therefore, the devil hates marriages and hates homes. Beware of his devices; don't make the mistake of Esau.

What did Esau do? At age 40 he went and married two women, two Hittites, there must have been a lot of hitting in their house after that. You know what happened later? Later when he found they were very upset with his marriage and sent Jacob to marry someone far away from their house, to please his parents he went and married a third time. Do you know whom he married? Ishmael's daughter or grand-daughter. That's a part of the family, 'now I will go and marry her also, now they will be happy.' Did you see? He is not walking in God's ways, the man who was rejected by God, marries the granddaughter of the man who was rejected by God. Because all the decisions are based on senses. There is no leading from the Spirit. Learn from their mistakes and learn from our mistakes. These are recorded lessons. God's Word says, "It's true". God is a God of mercy, God of compassion so if you repent and if you change and it is your second chance, don't goof up that chance. All of you are young, take your first chance make it your best chance, Amen?

Don't be in a hurry to get married, first grow up enough to get married. Marriage is a very heavy responsibility, grow up and then get married. Shall we pray?

### **Closing Prayer:**

*Father this evening we just thank You. You are a God who loves us, have loved us with an everlasting love and Your mercy endures to thousand generations towards those who love You. Because of Your love and love alone we are not consumed. Father, this evening, we commit Your young people into thy hands. I pray Father that Your Spirit will speak to them, minister to them that they make the right choices in life. Let their lives not be like Solomon, who had the knowledge and the wisdom but kept on making terrible choices. They have heard, they have learnt, they have known much of Your Word, help them to make the right choices in life so that You can build their lives, You can build their homes because the plans You have for each one of them is good. You give them a future and an appointed end and as they go back home, pray they will carry this foundation principles of the home with them. They will start living it tonight because the Word of God has the power to work in those who believe. Let it be a time of restoration in homes. You are a God who restores what the enemy has eaten, You are able to restore. So that they will be able to say, "The second half was better than the beginning". Glory of the latter house was greater than before; that's how You do things, do it in our lives today Lord, Thank You Father, Bless Your children in Your name. Keep them in Your love, in Your discipline. Thank You Father, for in Jesus name we pray, Amen.*

### **Benediction:**

*May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, love of the father, fellowship of the Holy Spirit, rest and abide with each one of us, Amen.*