

**Almont Vineyard Church**  
**Strong Christian Households**

May 9, 2026

**Opening Monologue**

Greetings, AVC family and friends — welcome!

To all our new guests and those who have downloaded the AVC app, we're so glad you're here. You're going to get a lot out of this app. Just an FYI — this is the sermon portion. When you scroll down, you'll find spiritual reflections, commentary, and devotional questions connected to this week's sermon. There are so many other great features on the AVC app too. The best way to explore is to just poke around and discover them. If you need any help, please contact the church office — we'd be happy to assist you.

Happy Mother's Day, Women of God!

And to every spiritual mother, grandmother, aunt, mentor, and woman who pours her life into the next generation — thank you. Today we honor you, and we honor the high and holy calling God has placed upon your life.

Think about this with me for a moment... Without a mother, none of us would be here. In the 19th century, a pastor and author wrote these powerful words in his writing titled "Great Thoughts":

"Mothers, ye are the sculptors of the souls of the coming men; queens of the cradle, humble or high, ye are the queens of the future. In your hands lie the destinies of men... The last thing forgotten, in all the recklessness of a wild and sinful life, is the prayer or hymn taught by a mother's lips... or uttered at a father's knee. Yes, when all other roads are closed, there is one road open to the heart of the desperate man — the memory of his mother."

That is not sentimental poetry. That is plain, historical fact.

In this week's short encouragement — also known as a very short sermon, lol — I'm going to be talking about how we need strong Christian households. The fact of the matter is that mothers play a vital role in building strong Christian households.

Join us this Sunday as we dive into this sermon, entitled Strong Christian Households. The family is the backbone of America, whether our society wants to acknowledge that or not.

I hope to see you on Sunday as we will also be doing a child dedication. Praise be to God for the next generation! And praise to the Lord for young parents who take their faith in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ very seriously!

In Christ,  
Rev. Pastor Brad

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**To Listen to this week's Sermon: "Strong Christian Households" Go to the Sermon tab here in our APP or use the links to our website or YouTube Channel where you can also listen to our Sermons:**

**Web:** <https://www.almontvineyardchurch.org/media>

**You Tube:** <https://www.youtube.com/@almontvineyardchurch>

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### **Key Sermon Text**

#### **Genesis 1:27**

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis%201%3A27%20&version=NIV>

#### **Psalms 139:13-14**

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalms%20139%3A13-14%20&version=NIV>

#### **Matthew 7:24-27**

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew%207%3A24-27%20&version=NIV>

#### **Joshua 24:15**

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Joshua%2024%3A15%20&version=NIV>

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### **Mothers: The Sacred Fabric of the Home**

Scripture presents motherhood as foundational to the spiritual and practical fabric of a home. A wise woman builds her household, while a foolish one tears it down with her own hands (Prov 14:1)—a stark reminder that mothers shape the very structure of family life.

The woman of excellence in Proverbs 31 demonstrates worth exceeding precious jewels, earning her husband's trust and bringing him good rather than harm throughout her life. She selects wool and flax, works with eager hands, rises while it is still night to provide for her household, and considers a field before buying it. Her lamp does not go out at night. She opens her arms to the poor and extends her hands to the needy. Her children arise and call her blessed, and her husband praises her, saying she surpasses all other women (Prov 31:10–31). This isn't mere sentimentality—it reflects the spiritual reality that mothers anchor their families in faith, virtue, diligence, and wisdom.

Mothers are not only nurturers but also primary teachers and disciplers. They instruct their children in the ways of the Lord from the earliest days. “Hear, my son, your father’s instruction, and forsake not your mother’s teaching, for they are a graceful garland for your head and pendants for your neck” (Prov 1:8–9). Faith transmits across generations: “I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well” (2 Tim 1:5). This maternal legacy builds a chain of godliness that outlasts any single lifetime.

The apostle Paul emphasizes this in his instructions for the church: older women are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or enslaved to wine, but teachers of what is good. They train the younger women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, so that the word of God may not be reviled (Titus 2:3–5). This mentorship creates a community of godly homes where faith is modeled daily.

Beyond the practical, mothers create the spiritual atmosphere of the home. The excellent wife rises before dawn, equips her family, speaks with wisdom, and has the law of kindness on her tongue. She looks well to the ways of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness (Prov 31:27). When mothers cultivate an environment reflecting God’s beauty, order, mercy, and truth, they give their families a foretaste of heaven. They shepherd little hearts toward the Good Shepherd, teaching them to love the Lord with all their heart, soul, and strength, and to talk of His commands throughout the day—at home, on the road, when lying down, and when rising (Deut 6:4–9).

This calling carries profound spiritual weight. The happiness and holiness of a home rest significantly in the hands of women, who have the power to make it a sanctuary—to fill it with prayer, Scripture, worship, and order so that God is the chief authority in everything.

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As one early writer observed, mothers hold the right and privilege to establish this spiritual foundation.

Mothers also embody sacrificial love and strength. Like Hannah, who poured out her heart in prayer and dedicated her son Samuel to the Lord (1 Sam 1), or Mary, who pondered God’s words in her heart while raising the Messiah (Luke 2:19), godly mothers trust God amid uncertainty and point their children to Him. Their quiet faithfulness—changing diapers, preparing meals, comforting tears, teaching truth—builds eternal cathedrals unseen by the world but fully noticed by God.

In a culture that often undervalues homemaking or pressures women in conflicting directions, Scripture reminds us of the high honor of this role. A mother’s influence shapes not only her

own children but ripples into society through the character she instills. Her example of diligence, generosity, wisdom, and fear of the Lord equips the next generation to live for Christ.

To every mother: your labor is not in vain. Whether in biological, adoptive, spiritual, or mentoring roles, you weave the fabric of homes that honor God. Lean on His grace, for “she who fears the Lord is to be praised” (Prov 31:30), and her works will praise her in the gates. May your homes stand as beacons of His love, order, and truth for generations to come.

(Sources:1-2)

### **Mother Still Have It**

The question echoes across generations: do mothers still embody the excellence Scripture celebrates? Proverbs 31 functions as a mirror for Christian women, reflecting what God has designed as the ultimate godly woman. The answer to whether mothers still possess this quality depends entirely on what we’re measuring.

The ideal woman is strong, brave, industrious, and trustworthy—worth an entire army to her husband, children, and nation. This isn’t sentimentality; it’s spiritual power. The author of Proverbs strings pearls of praise, attempting to think of praiseworthy things about the woman who fears the Lord. That fear of the Lord remains the cornerstone: “Favor is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised.”

Mothers absolutely still have it—when they prioritize what endures over what merely impresses. The contrast is stark. Earlier generations depicted women ironing, cleaning, cooking, reading stories to children, playing games in the backyard. Today’s cultural messaging often pulls mothers toward competing priorities. Yet her children rise up and call her blessed, and her husband praises her—and this honor belongs to mothers every day of the year, not just Mother’s Day.

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The excellence of Proverbs 31 isn’t about perfection or superhuman achievement. It’s about a woman whose deepest allegiance belongs to God, whose strength flows from that reverence, and whose influence shapes generations. There’s a revelation in watching how much of Christ appears in her maternal way. That capacity remains fully alive in mothers who choose it. The question isn’t whether mothers can embody this—it’s whether they will.

(Sources: 3-5)

### **Commentary, Spiritual Applications, and Theological Reflections**

#### **Biblical Reflection on Genesis 1:27 & Psalm 139**

God created humanity in His image—both male and female (Gen 1:26–27)—a declaration that establishes the foundational dignity of all people. The primary characteristic distinguishing humanity is being made in God’s image, which identifies humankind as the ultimate expression of God’s creative work.

Genesis 1:27 is structured as an embedded poem with a chiasmic arrangement, where the focus centers on the divine image. Both male and female share this image-bearing status. This is not incidental—male and female human beings are image-bearers who together are responsible for governing the world. Both genders, functioning relationally as one, image God in accordance with the divine plan.

The *imago Dei* (image of God) encompasses multiple dimensions. It includes intellectual capacity—the ability to comprehend complex concepts, communicate knowledge in various forms, and create—attributes that reflect God’s own nature as revealed throughout Scripture. It also includes moral capacity: an innate moral compass reflecting God’s values and standards “written on [our] hearts.”

Psalms 139 emphasizes God’s intimate agency in human formation. Using vivid imagery of God “creating” and “knitting” the psalmist in the mother’s womb, it highlights that from conception the Lord was actively involved in fashioning each life. This underscores that your existence—your very being—reflects deliberate divine craftsmanship and purpose.

“For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.”  
(Psalm 139:13–14)

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Scripture affirms repeatedly that our identity is rooted in God’s creative act, not in external voices or cultural narratives. Genesis 1:27 establishes that being made in God’s image precedes any other identity marker. This is the foundational truth about who we are. Male and female alike bear this image, meaning our essential worth and identity originate in divine intention, not human opinion or shifting cultural definitions.

**Psalm 139:13–14** deepens this reality by showing God’s meticulous, personal involvement. The psalmist declares we are “fearfully and wonderfully made”—acknowledging both the awe-inspiring nature of human creation and the tender care God invested in crafting each person. This was not careless or accidental; it was intentional divine artistry.

The critical spiritual principle here is this: **your identity is determined by God’s declaration about you, not by the world’s assessment.** The world constantly redefines identity based on appearance, performance, feelings, social status, or cultural trends. Scripture anchors identity in

something immovable—the fact that you bear God’s image and were deliberately, carefully fashioned by Him.

This truth does not mean we ignore growth, sanctification, or self-reflection. Rather, it calls us to filter every external message through the unchanging lens of biblical truth. When the world contradicts what God says about our worth, purpose, and design, we are invited to trust God’s Word over cultural pressure. Our identity in Christ supersedes every competing claim.

**Additional Biblical support for this foundation includes:**

- **Colossians 3:10** — We are being renewed in knowledge in the image of our Creator.
- **Ephesians 4:24** — We are created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.
- **James 3:9** — With our tongues we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God’s likeness—reminding us to treat every person with dignity.

In a culture that often confuses or redefines identity, these passages call us back to the Creator. You are not an accident. You are not defined by trends or opinions. You are fearfully and wonderfully made by the God who knit you together with purpose.

**(Sources: 6-8)**

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## **Households Built on Jesus Christ**

### **Matthew 7:24-27**

In reality, faith in Christ is what will count at the judgment.

**“Everyone then who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock.”** (Matthew 7:24)

Jesus’ true followers do not merely hear His words — they act on them. They allow His message to make a real difference in their daily lives. The key to this parable is its central message: the one who builds “on rock” is a hearing, responding disciple, not a phony or superficial one.

The apostle James echoes this truth:

**“But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves... But those who look into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and persevere, being not hearers who forget but doers who act — they will be blessed in their doing.”** (James 1:22–25)

### **Walk the Talk**

Some athletes can “talk” a great game, but that tells you nothing about their actual ability. In the same way, not everyone who talks about heaven belongs to God’s kingdom. Jesus is far more concerned about our walk than our talk. He wants us to do what is right, not just say the right words.

Your house — which represents your life — will withstand the storms of life only if you act on Jesus’ words instead of merely talking about them. If you’ve ever wondered whether you are truly a Christian, start acting like one. If you talk a lot about your intense faith, stop jabbering and start showing your faith through faithful living.

Practicing obedience builds our lives on the solid foundation of Jesus’ words so we can weather the storms of life:

**“The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.”** (Matthew 7:25)

Jesus pictured the climate of Palestine: heavy rains during the wet season could bring sudden flooding that would wash away poorly built homes. But houses with foundations dug deep into solid rock remained unmoved. When the “storms of life” come — and they always do — only the life built on the foundation of Jesus Christ will stand firm.

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### **A Little Nudge**

Like a house of cards, the fool’s life eventually crumbles. Most people do not deliberately choose to build on a false foundation; they simply don’t think seriously about their life’s purpose. Many are headed for destruction not out of stubborn rebellion, but out of thoughtlessness.

Part of our responsibility as believers is to help others stop and consider where their lives are headed. When you meet someone close to making a decision to follow Jesus, give them a word of encouragement. Offer to pray with them, walk alongside them, and show them what a difference Christ makes. Everyone faces spiritual inertia — sometimes a simple, caring nudge is all it takes to help them step toward Jesus.

**“And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a foolish man who built his house on sand.”** (Matthew 7:26)

Both men built houses. Both houses may have even looked similar from the outside. But only one stood the test. When the same storms came — rain, rising streams, and howling winds — the house on sand collapsed with a great crash. This represents final judgment and separation from God.

As character is revealed by fruit, so faith is revealed by storms. The foundation, not the outward appearance of the house, determines what happens on the Day of Judgment. Jesus expects radical discipleship — lives that reflect the characteristics He described in the Sermon on the Mount.

### **Authority**

Our culture celebrates individual autonomy and personal truth. Yet we cannot replace absolute truth with “whatever feels true for me.” Jesus concluded His sermon with a powerful challenge about foundations. The crowds were amazed at His authority, but amazement is not the same as acceptance or submission.

People need to see and hear that we have made Jesus’ teaching the actual foundation of our lives. Sharing the gospel includes helping others examine the foundation they are building on — and demonstrating with our own lives that Christ’s Word is trustworthy.

**Jesus is our Rock.**

(Sources:9-10)

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### **The Joshua Declaration**

#### **Joshua 24:15 – Standing on Our Faith**

As Christians, no matter how we want to slice it or dice it, it all comes down to a clear, daily choice: we will either make the Lord the priority in our families, or we will not. There is no neutral ground. Either Jesus Christ is Lord of our homes, or something else will take His place.

Joshua’s bold declaration cuts straight to the heart of Christian faithfulness:

**“Choose this day whom you will serve... But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”** (Joshua 24:15)

This was never meant to be a one-time event. Joshua understood that genuine commitment to God is a daily, deliberate choice made amid constant competing pressures. The world is always pulling us toward compromise through seemingly small decisions. At work we decide how to conduct ourselves — whether we laugh along with coarse jokes, say whatever it takes to gain business, or remain truthful even when it’s uncomfortable. At home we choose what we watch on television and whether we change the channel when it insults our faith or tempts us to sin. We decide which books we read, which internet sites we visit, which places we go, and which friends we align ourselves with. Every single decision affects our lives, our faith, our families, and our relationships — and the choices we make reveal the true state of our hearts.

Sadly, there is also a dangerous tendency among God’s people to be spiritual for a while and then shrink back into old patterns and habits — just like the Israelites who wandered in the desert for forty years. I don’t know about you, but I don’t like to wander. And unfortunately, when parents wander spiritually, the whole household tends to follow their lead. The family drifts. The next generation suffers. May we not be wanderers! Instead, may we plant our lives and our homes on the strong, unshakeable foundation of faith in Jesus Christ.

Living out Joshua’s declaration requires us to understand its two vital dimensions. First, we must make the foundational choice: Will we live for ourselves, or will we fully surrender to God’s will? Will we worship the temporary things of this world, or the eternal God of the universe? Will we trust Jesus alone for salvation, or lean on our own instincts and understanding?

But that initial commitment is only the beginning. If we choose to follow God, He calls us to die to ourselves daily — to wake up each morning and deliberately set our hearts on His will. We must decide how we will act today, what we will say, how we will treat our spouse and children, what example we will set, and how we will live out our faith in the ordinary moments of family life.

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Crucially, we must recognize our complete dependence on God’s strength. Remaining faithful to the Lord amid all the temptations and distractions of life requires far more spiritual power than we possess on our own. We dare not overestimate our own ability. When Christ calls us to follow Him, we come — but we whisper in our hearts, “We cannot.” When invited to confess His name boldly before our families and the world, we speak — but with the intimate thought, “We cannot do this in our own strength.” We look to Him whose strength is made perfect in weakness, and that is how we remain faithful unto the end.

**The choice is ours every single day.**

Will our homes be built on the shifting sand of culture, convenience, and compromise — or on the solid rock of Jesus Christ and His Word?

As for me and my house — we will serve the Lord.

May this be the unwavering declaration of every Christian family represented here today. Let us reject spiritual wandering once and for all. Let us stand firm in our faith, lead our households with courage and conviction, and build homes that honor God for generations to come.

**(Sources: 11-12 & Rev. Standfest)**

**Resources:** Rev. Brad Standfest, (1) Logos Bible Commentaries: [1] Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth, Adorned Book and Study Guide Set (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2018). [2] A. B. G. Lillingston, “Religion in the Home,” *The Churchman* (1904–1905), 741. [3] John F. MacArthur Jr.,

John MacArthur Sermon Archive (Panorama City, CA: Grace to You, 2014). [4] Henry M. Morris, Days to Remember: Devotions for the Holidays Throughout the Year (Wordsearch, 2009), 111. [5] John Piper, Sermons from John Piper (1980–1989) (Minneapolis, MN: Desiring God, 2007). [6] Daniel L. Akin and R. Scott Pace, Pastoral Theology: Theological Foundations for Who a Pastor Is and What He Does (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2017), 114–116. [7] Jonathan King, The Beauty of the Lord: Theology as Aesthetics, Studies in Historical and Systematic Theology (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2018), 126. [8] Life Application Study Bible insights and general biblical commentary were also drawn upon for practical application and cross-references. [9] Barton, Bruce B. Matthew. Life Application Bible Commentary. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1996. [10] Additional cross-references and reflections drawn from Scripture (Matthew 7:24-27, James 1:22-25) and general biblical teaching. [11] Tim LaHaye, Jerry B. Jenkins, and Frank M. Martin, Embracing Eternity: Living Each Day with a Heart toward Heaven (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 2004), 243. [12] J. J. Knap, The Loins Girded, trans. Martien C. Vanderspek (Ontario, Canada, 1997).

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## Sermon Notes:

### Happy Mother's Day, Women of God!

And to every spiritual mother, grandmother, aunt, mentor, and woman who pours her life into the next generation — thank you. Today we honor you, and we honor the high and holy calling God has placed upon your life.

Think about this with me for a moment... Without a mother, we wouldn't be here.

In the 19th century, a pastor and author wrote these powerful words in his writing titled "Great Thoughts":

"Mothers, ye are the sculptors of the souls of the coming men; queens of the cradle, humble or high, ye are the queens of the future. In your hands lie the destinies of men. I am not speaking poetry, but plain fact, which history proves. The prison chaplain will tell you that the last thing forgotten, in all the recklessness of a wild and sinful life, is the prayer or hymn taught by a mother's lips... or uttered at a father's knee. Yes, when all other roads are closed, there is one road open to the heart of the desperate man—the memory of his mother."

That is not sentimental poetry. That is plain, historical fact.

In modern-day America, we might be deemed as radical or even a lunatic for saying it, but **homes are under attack**. The fact is... homes influence societies, churches, and nations.

I say... No thanks to the political theatre telling us how to be parents and grandparents. I'm sorry... No I'm not... The political theatre is guilty of attempting to brainwash the minds of our children and teenagers. They attempt to change their identity... and tell them they have choices. Choices for what?

**Christians... Here is what God's Word says:**

**Genesis 1:27** So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

**Psalms 139:13-14** For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful; I know that full well.

Hear me... You don't have to be anyone else. You were created perfectly by God the Father.

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Moms & Dads... Grandpas & Grandmas... Aunts, Uncles, Christians... We must establish strong families and households. We must resist what the world is calling normal and stay strong on the foundation of Jesus Christ and His Word.

Jesus said this: **Matthew 7:24-27** "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."

- **Jesus is our Rock.**

Christians, may we build our hearts and homes on truth. May we encourage our children, grandchildren, and teenagers... not just by our words but by our actions and attitudes.

We need strong families that stand on the Joshua Declaration:

**"As for me and my household we will serve the Lord."**

I want to say this before we conclude with a child dedication...

I am so proud of our young families at AVC for taking their faith in Christ seriously...

(Hand Clap!!)

Let's stand firm, moms and dads. Let's lead our homes with courage and conviction. The next generation is watching.

## Happy Mother's Day!

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### Devotional Questions:

#### 1. Identity in Christ

Genesis 1:27 declares that God created you male and female in His own image, and Psalm 139:13-14 says you are “fearfully and wonderfully made.” In what areas of your life are you allowing the world, culture, or social media to redefine your identity instead of God’s declaration? What practical step will you take this week to anchor your heart and your family’s hearts more firmly in the truth that you were created perfectly by God the Father?

#### 2. The High Calling of Motherhood and Family

Scripture presents mothers as the fabric of the home (Proverbs 31, Titus 2:3-5). Whether you are a biological mother, spiritual mother, father, grandparent, or mentor, how are you currently pouring into the next generation? What is one specific way you can rise up early (like the Proverbs 31 woman) to create a spiritual atmosphere of beauty, order, and godliness in your home this week?

#### 3. Homes Under Attack

The message warned that homes are under attack and that the political and cultural voices are attempting to brainwash our children’s minds and redefine their identity. Where do you see these pressures most strongly affecting your family right now? What boundaries or intentional choices will you make as a parent or grandparent to resist what the world calls “normal” and instead stand unashamedly on the foundation of Jesus Christ and His Word?

#### 4. Building on the Rock

Jesus said in Matthew 7:24-27 that the wise person hears His words and puts them into practice, while the foolish person hears but does not act — and their house falls with a great crash. Honestly examine your life: Are you a “hearer” or a “doer” of God’s Word? In what one area of your daily walk (speech, entertainment, relationships, parenting, work) do you need to stop merely talking about faith and start actively obeying Christ so your household can withstand the storms of life?

#### 5. The Joshua Declaration – Daily Choice

Joshua 24:15 challenges us: “Choose this day whom you will serve... But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.” The commentary reminded us that this is not a one-time decision but a daily, deliberate choice. What competing pressures or “small decisions” (media, friendships, entertainment, speech, priorities) are pulling your family

away from wholehearted devotion to God? What will you publicly declare — and live out — this week as the leader of your household?

**6. Dying to Self and Depending on God's Strength**

The Joshua commentary emphasized that following God requires daily dying to self and recognizing “We cannot” do this in our own strength. Where have you been relying on your own willpower instead of God's power to lead your family? How can you practically begin each morning by surrendering your home to the Lord and asking for His strength to remain faithful amid temptation?

**7. Legacy and the Next Generation**

The sermon closed with great joy over young families taking their faith seriously and with a call to build strong households that influence societies, churches, and nations. Looking at your own home and the next generation, what kind of spiritual legacy are you building right now? What is one bold, courageous step you will take this week to encourage your children, grandchildren, or the young families around you to stand on the Joshua Declaration and build their lives on the Rock of Jesus Christ?