



WEEKLY SERMON

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Message: The Christian Home

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The Bible tells us attitudes and actions we should put off, and other attitudes and actions we should put on. Let's consider these and purpose in our hearts to obey the commands of God concerning them. First, we will consider attitudes and actions a Christian should put off. In Colossians 3:8 we read, ***"But now ye also put off all these..."***

- (1). **Anger:** In Ephesians 4:31 we read, ***"Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor and evil speaking, be put away from you with all malice."*** Learn to show a cool head and measured words in every situation.
- (2). **Wrath:** In Ephesians 4:26 we read, ***"Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath."*** Avoid letting anger simmer and grow to wrath which will boil over, and later make you ashamed of your response.
- (3). **Slander:** In Proverbs 10:18 we read, ***"He that hideth hatred with lying lips, and he that uttereth a slander is a fool."*** Be very careful what you say about others. If you can't say something good about a person then say nothing.
- (4). **Blasphemy:** In Colossians 3:8 we read, ***"But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth."*** Never allow ridicule of great eternal things to escape from your lips. The Lord's name is never to be used in vain, and hell is a place and not a curse word.
- (5). **Dirty Language:** Again in Colossians 3:8 we read, ***"But now ye also put off all these...filthy communication out of your mouth."*** Remember your eyes are the window of your soul, so keep the words of your mouth acceptable before the Lord.
- (6). **Lying:** In Ephesians 4:25 we read, ***"Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor: for we are members one of another."*** We who are saved should be known for truth in our words and actions.

This does not exhaust the list of "take offs," but let's look at attitudes and actions to ***"put on"***. In Colossians 3:12 we read, ***"Put on therefore..."***

- (1). **Mercy:** In Matthew 5:7 we read, ***"Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy."*** Showing mercy can go far in enhancing your life and testimony before others.
- (2). **Kindness:** In Colossians 3:12 we read, ***"Put on therefore as the elect of God, holy and beloved bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering."*** In the midst of your busy lives be sure to look around and show kindness to others.
- (3). **Humility:** In I Peter 5:5 we read, ***"Likewise ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the"***

proud, and giveth grace to the humble." Pride always goes before a fall, but humility is great attire for a gracious, caring believer.

(4). **Gentleness**: In Galatians 5:22 we read, ***"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith."*** We must not be pushy, or gushing with pride, but rather humble servants of God.

(5). **Patience**: In Luke 8:15c we read, ***"Bring forth fruit with patience."*** Someone has said that patience is the easiest thing to lose. Others may struggle to do right, but be patient and understand their struggle.

(6). **Forgiveness**: In Matthew 6:14 we read, ***"For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you."*** A wise believer will say, "I am sorry." Christ forgave us, and we must forgive others.

(7). **Love**: In Mark 12:33 we read, ***"And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength and to love his neighbor as himself, is more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices."*** A great song writer listed the Love of God as the greatest thing ever given to us. Our world has become a bitter, angry place, but we are to be examples of love towards God and all those around us.

It is my prayer that God will use this message to help you shed evil and then be clothed in proper attitudes and actions to please God.

In *His* Amazing Grace,
Pastor David Miklas

Have I Done My Best for Jesus?

**I wonder, have I giv'n my best to Jesus
Who died upon the cruel tree?
To think of His great sacrifice at Calv'ry,
I know my Lord expects the best from me.**

**How many are the lost that I have lifted?
How many are the chained I've helped to free?
I wonder, have I done my best for Jesus,
When He has done so much for me?**

**The hours that I have wasted are so many;
The hours I've spent for Christ so few.
Because of all my lack of love for Jesus,
I wonder if His heart is breaking too?**

**I wonder have I cared enough for others,
Or have I let them die alone?
I might have helped a wand'rer to the Saviour;
The seed of precious life I might have sown.**

**No longer will I stay within the valley;
I'll climb to mountain heights above.
The world is dying now for want of someone
To tell them of the Saviour's matchless LOVE.**

Many unsaved people are waiting until they get better before they get saved. But you don't get better to get saved; you get saved to get better!

“My Nest is Empty, What do I do?”

INTRODUCTION: Maybe you have never thought of it this way, but marriages pass through five progressive cycles, each one having its own unique set of challenges.

First: There is the **FAMILY FOUNDING** cycle. This is from the wedding until the first child is born.

Second: There is the **CHILD BEARING** cycle. This is from the first child born until the last child enters school.

Third: There is the **CHILD REARING** cycle. This is from the time the first child enters school until the last child leaves for college.

Fourth: This is the **CHILD LAUNCHING** cycle. This is from the time the first child leaves until the last child leaves the home.

Fifth: This is the **EMPTY NEST** cycle. This is the time when the couple is a couple again.

It is hard to believe that my wife and I are right back where we started. For the past nineteen years, we have been experiencing the fifth cycle of our marriage, the **EMPTY NEST**.

Perhaps you are saying, “Pastor, our children are still **SMALL**.” If your child is 3 years old today, then the **CHILD LUNCHING** cycle will happen the day after tomorrow. If your child is 10 years old, then the **EMPTY NEST** will begin after the service. As we age, days pass more quickly each year.

Sometime ago I found this interesting article entitled “**Someday, the Empty Nest.**” It is rather long yet it has a lot to say. Here it is.

Someday when the kids are grown, things are going to be a lot different. The garage won’t be full of bikes, electric train tracks on plywood, sawhorses surrounded by chunks of two-by-fours, nails, a hammer and saw, unfinished “experimental projects,” and the rabbit cage. I’ll be able to park both cars neatly in just the right places, and never again stumble over skateboards, a pile of papers, or the bag of rabbit food now split and spilled. Ugh!

Someday when the kids are grown, the kitchen will be incredibly neat. The sink will stay free of sticky dishes, the garbage disposal won’t get choked on rubber bands or paper cups, and the refrigerator won’t be clogged with nine bottles of milk, and we won’t lose the tops to the jelly jars, catsup bottles, the peanut butter, the margarine, or the mustard. The water jar won’t be put back empty, the ice trays won’t be left out overnight, the blender won’t stand for six hours coated with the remains of a midnight malt, and the honey will stay inside the container.

Someday when the kids are grown, my lovely wife will actually have time to get dressed leisurely. A long bath (without five panic interruptions), time to do her nails without answering a dozen questions and reviewing spelling words, having had her hair done that afternoon with trying to squeeze it in between racing a sick dog to the vet and a trip to the orthodontist with a kid in a bad mood because she lost her headgear.

Someday when the kids are grown, the instrument called the telephone will actually be available. It won’t look like it’s growing from a teenager’s ear. It will simply hang there...silently and amazingly available! It will be free of lipstick, human saliva, mayonnaise, corn chip crumbs, and toothpicks stuck in those little holes.

Someday when the kids are grown, I’ll be able to see through the car windows. Fingerprints, tongue licks, sneaker footprints, and dog tracks (nobody knows how) will be conspicuous by their absence. The back seat will not be a disaster area, we won’t sit on jacks or crayons any more, the tank will not always be somewhere between empty and fumes and amen, and, amen, I won’t have to clean up dog messes another time.

Someday when the kids are grown, we will return to normal conversations. You know just plain American talk. “Gross!” won’t punctuate every sentence seven times. “Yuk!” will not be heard. “Hurry up, I gotta go!” will not accompany the banging of fists on the bathroom door. “It’s my turn” won’t call for a referee.

Someday when the kids are grown, we won't run out of toilet tissue. My wife won't lose her keys. I won't have to answer a thousand and one questions, or wait up forever until they get home from dates...or have to take a number to get a word in at the supper table.

Yes, someday when the kids are grown, things are going to be a lot different. One by one they'll leave our nest, and the place will begin to resemble order and maybe even a touch of elegance. The crackling of the fireplaces will echo through the hallway. The phone will be strangely silent. The house will be **QUIET...and CALM...and ALWAYS CLEAN...and EMPTY....and FILLED WITH MEMORIES...and LONELY...and we won't like that at all!** We'll spend our time not looking forward to **SOMEDAY**, but looking back to **YESTERDAY**, and thinking, **"Maybe we can baby-sit the grandkids and get some life back in this place for a change!"**

Now in light of these changes, **"Will you be prepared or perplexed by this change in your lives?"** It is this 5th stage that I want us to think about during this message. For sure there are pressures and demands connected with the first 4 stages. However, there are many other subtle hazards that threaten a marriage as the nest empties.

There is the problem of **decreasing physical attraction**. Someone said, "At my age I have everything I had 25 years ago, it's only 4 inches lower."

There is the problem of **increasing selfishness**. It is hard to admit, but the empty nest is often occupied by two very stubborn, self-willed people.

There is the problem of **boredom and depression**.

There is the problem of **loneliness** after the busy, active children are gone.

There is the problem of **retirement** for some which as someone said, **"Retirement can be delightful or devastating...a dream come true or a dreadful nightmare. It all depends on how one prepares for it."** If it just happens, "watch out." Many a marriage partner puts everything in neutral, and rapidly loses touch with life.

Changes of life will come and go.

Our church, its people and its programs will change tomorrow.

Our relationships will be different tomorrow.

Our children as they grow up are also undergoing changes in their lives.

Unless you are prepared for the changes, and work with those changes, you will be **PERPLEXED and FRUSTRATED**.

Years ago I learned a valuable lesson from Dr. John R. Rice in the raising of his five daughters. What I learned, I put into practice with each of our children on or about their 15th-16th birthday. Realizing that one day they would be off to college and then probably given in marriage, as it turned out to be for all five children, I gradually began to pull myself away both **MENTALLY AND EMOTIONALLY**. Oh, believe me it was painful, but not as painful as it could have been had I not started to break away several years prior.

In the writings of Solomon, he developed for us **THREE** stages of life:

From the Song of Solomon, Solomon expresses the romance of a young man and young woman full of life, full of love.

From the book of Proverbs, Solomon describes a man grown up, someone who is full of wisdom, now giving instructions to his son.

From the book of Ecclesiastes, Solomon pictures an older man lamenting his life, because he had forgotten the God of his youth.

Please follow me as I read from **Ecclesiastes 3:1-14**.

"To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: (2) A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; (3) A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; (4) A time to weep,

and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; (5) A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; (6) A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; (7) A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; (8) A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace. (9) What profit hath he that worketh in that wherein he laboureth? (10) I have seen the travail, which God hath given to the sons of men to be exercised in it. (11) He hath made everything beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end. (12) I know that there is no good in them, but for a man to rejoice, and to do good in his life. (13) And also that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour, it is the gift of God. (14) I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him.”

Notice again verses 1, “To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:” and verse 11, “He hath made every thing beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end.”

Here is the point, if you are going to be prepared for this time of life. You must begin this process until you reach the day when you finally let them go. Here are **FOUR** facts.

1. **Accept the fact that it’s God’s plan that your child gradually pulls away from you.**
DON'T FIGHT IT, ACCEPT IT!

2. **As the child grows older, you as a parent should give added emphasis to the activities at church.** By the time a child begins high school, he or she will be so active in Christian school sports, social activities, church youth groups and ministries, they will not have time to run with the wrong crowd.

3. **Gradually build your life away from the teenagers.** Parents who build their lives completely around their children, will soon have their lives pulled out from under them. Therefore, as the teenager spends less and less time with you, you will be left with more and more time alone. Become involved in other activities, other hobbies to fill the void, so that your lives will not end at their marriage altar or the airport or the college dorm.

Have you ever wondered why the parent is so sad when the teenager leaves home, and the teenager is so happy? The answer is simple. The teenager has life ahead with activities planned, and dreams for the future. Whereas too often the parents have only their memories. **PARENTS LOVE YOUR CHILDREN, LOVE YOUR TEENAGERS, BUT PREPARE TO KEEP LIVING WHEN THEY ARE GONE!**

4. Now that they are married and/or on their own, **learn, how to be a happy in-law and not a grumpy outlaw.**

Be sensitive to their desires. Don't impose yourself upon them. Remember they are a family now.

You have released them now let them alone.

Be sure to treat both your child and their spouse equally. Remember they are now one.

Be careful not to criticize one partner to another.

Be careful to mind your own business not theirs. Don't give unsolicited advice. You may not like the way they spend their money, or the way they spend their time, or the way they raise their children.

By the way you had your day, now give them a chance. If you have done your job, then just sit back and let them put into practice what you have taught them.

Be sure your attitude is right and controlled by the Holy Spirit. If it is, you will be a gracious in-law. Sit back and enjoy your grandchildren, if and when they arrive.

Now some of you are saying, “Pastor, that is good advice for the older generation, who have arrived at the empty nest. But wait a minute, I am only in my 20's and early 30's. This stage of life is a long way off.” Hold it, I said the same thing in my 20's and 30's just

a short time ago, and I couldn't imagine myself being 79, but here I am looking at the empty nest.

Now that I have arrived, how do I **COPE** with the empty nest? Please notice again Ecclesiastes 3:11, "He hath made every thing beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end." and verse 22, "Wherefore I perceive that there is nothing better, than that a man should rejoice in his own works; for that is his portion: for who shall bring him to see what shall be after him?" There needs to be some growing up, pressing on, and getting with it.

To the parents of adults, when you have reached this stage consider these **THREE** things.

1. **RENEW your devotion to the Lord.** Notice verse 14, "I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him." Fearing old age will paralyze you. It will dry you up to become a bitter old man or a bitter old woman.

Trust in the Lord.
Be occupied with Him.
Find your security in Him.
Keep a continuous tender touch with the living Lord.

2. **REALIZE your promotion to the empty nest stage of life is from the Lord.** Notice verse 22, "Wherefore I perceive that there is nothing better, than that a man should rejoice in his own works; for that is his portion: for who shall bring him to see what shall be after him?" There is too much going on to crawl in a hole and do nothing.

Rejoice that you are alive.
Rejoice that you can still see the beauty around you.
Rejoice in the lives of your children and their families, especially he grandchildren.

3. **REPLACE your previous activities with giving.** Notice Ecclesiastics 11:1-2, "Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days. Give a portion to seven, and also to eight; for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth." The key to life is not that of getting, but that of giving.

The happiest older folks are those who give and give generously. It's when you pull back, close the door and let a selfish attitude set in, that you shrivel into the most miserable people on earth. Make plans to accomplish something. **STAY BUSY!** Remember it was 80-year-old Caleb who said to Joshua, Tell God to give me that mountain.

To the adult children of aging parents, you now have a responsibility to help your parents **COPE with the EMPTY NEST.**

1. **Plan to provide for their later years.** You will find this instruction given to us in I Timothy 5. Here Paul gives us instructions concerning widows. In verse 3 we read that we are to "Honor widows that are widows indeed." Then in verse 8, "Children are to provide for their parents, and if they don't they are worse than an infidel." May I remind you that in your youth, your parents cared for your needs, and now it's your turn to care for their needs. When and if the time comes, their needs now become your needs.

2. As your parents' nest grows empty and they sit back with the **WISDOM** of God and life, **learn from their experience and gain from their wisdom.**

"Pastor, what do you mean here?" Well, a young adult at 21 or 31 must still make many decisions in life, sometimes without the knowledge to make these decisions regarding a

job, a school, a place to live, the choice of a mate in marriage, family, children, investments, and ministry.

At my age I have made most of these life decisions. **Through my experiences, I have developed standards while using Godly principles.** I no longer have to make those **DECISIONS**, but I have the accumulated **WISDOM** based on those decisions. Now, I say to the youth:

Don't disregard the **WISDOM** of the older generation, use it.

To the younger folks, I say, "ASK US."

To the older folks, I say, "GIVE TO THEM."

Having **LIVED** our lives, and having **RAISED** our children, the nest is empty, "What now?" In Isaiah 5:1-4 we read.

"Now will I sing to my wellbeloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My wellbeloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill: (2) And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes. (3) And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. (4) What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?"

Did you notice the phrase in verse 4, "What could have been done more..." Someone said this,

"We are strange creatures. We plan what we are going to do...

when I get out of high school,
when I get married,
when I have a baby,
when the children go to school.

It seems that basically we look FORWARD all the time. That's the first part of life. The last part of life seems to be spent lamenting the fact that we did not do what we planned in the first part of life.

It seems that we NEVER DO TODAY what we planned yesterday to do tomorrow and will wish tomorrow that we had done today. Today is the only material with which yesterday's are made. Today is yesterday's tomorrow and today is tomorrow's yesterday. All the things you planned yesterday to do today, you will remember tomorrow if you did them."

Again notice verse 4 Isaiah said, "What could have been done more..." To those of us who are entering this stage of life, and to those of you who are still facing this stage of life, let these words sink in. **"WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN DONE MORE?"**

One father summed it up this way. He said, "My family is all grown. The kids are all gone. But if I had to do it over again, this is what I'd do." Here is his list, thought provoking, sobering and very much true.

1. I would love my wife more in front of my children.
2. I would laugh with my children more, at our mistakes and joys.
3. I would listen more, even to the littlest child.
4. I would be more honest about my own weaknesses, and stop pretending perfection.
5. I would pray differently for my family, instead of focusing on them, I'd focus on me.
6. I would do more things together with my children.
7. I would do more encouraging and bestow more praise.
8. I would pay more attention to little things; deeds and words of love and kindness.
9. And then, finally, if I had to do it all over again, I would share God more intimately with my

family, every ordinary thing that happened in every ordinary day I would use to direct them to God.

Then when you say, "GOOD-BYE" to those you raised and taught, disciplined, loved and worked with for these 18 to 20 or so years, as you look in his or her face, can you say, "I did what I could."

Then when you say, "GOOD-BYE" at the altar to the one whom you carried in your arms and nourished at your breast, can you say, "I did what I could."

What could have been done more? That's the thought I leave with you. As you near that season of the **EMPTY NEST**, if your child is 3 today, he or she will be gone the day after tomorrow. If your child is 10 years old now, they will start leaving after the service this evening.

**When the days of being a mother are over, and they will be,
When the days of being a father are over, and they will be,
When that day comes and you arrive at the altar where your son stands tall as you grant him his declaration of independence, or your daughter stands radiant as you give her away...**

May you be able to say, "Thank God I did it!" In stead of, "What could I have done more?"

If God has spoken to your heart after reading the sermon "My Nest is Empty, What do I do?" then right now talk to God about what He has spoken to you.

Do you have the assurance that one day you will go to heaven? If you have no assurance that you know Jesus Christ, then I trust you will decide to accept Him as your personal Savior. The Bible tells us in

Acts 16:31, "...Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved..."
Romans 10:13, "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

This prayer is here for those who need to ask Jesus to be their personal Savior: "I do want to go to Heaven. I know I am a sinner, and I do believe Jesus Christ died for me. I realize I cannot buy this great salvation, nor can I earn it. Knowing Jesus died on the cross and arose from the grave to pay my sin debt and to purchase my salvation, I do now trust Him as my Savior, and from this moment on I am completely depending on Him for my salvation."

If you made the decision to accept Jesus Christ as your personal Savior let me know? Please send an e-mail to, pdmikBBM@aol.com and I will send you some literature that will help you in your Christian life.

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