

When I was a kid I use to ride the school bus. Come to a R&R track we held up our hand.

**Stop, Look & Listen** (Funny thing with our hand)

The point was to keep from being sideswiped by a train.

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One of the sobering realities these days is how many families and marriages are getting sideswiped.

Often because people get so busy chasing the world, careers they fail to stop, look and listen at what is going on in their lives.

So this morning I want to encourage you to “Stop where you are at & Stand with Me and Read the Word of God”

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Ephesians 5:22-6:4

“Stop &...”

It seems like every week I hear of situations with serious marriage issues, serious child rearing issues.

99% of the time it is a result of things that could be avoided.

This morning I don’t know where all of you are at, but there isn’t a 1 of us that don’t need to stop at times to check things out in these areas.

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**1st-Stop & Listen**

When it comes to the family & marriage the one place we need to listen is the Word of God regularly.

Looking for direction from it vs. the world.

Sad – the **divorce rate** for the church is the same as the un-churched.

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**Men** – I am not putting all the blame on us, but a lot of it is.

*A lot of what happens depends on leadership, and that deals with men.*

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Men, God has called us to be the leaders. Established way back in Genesis.

*Gen 2:18-Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him."*

That same pattern carries over to the church....

*1 Timothy 2: we read v.8-14 .....I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling;  
9 likewise also that women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire,  
10 but with what is proper for women who profess godliness-with good works.  
11 Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness.  
12 I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet.  
13 For Adam was formed first, then Eve;  
14 and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor.*  
Notice the reasons Paul is clear that women are excluded from leadership in the local church & from teaching men....It isn't because they aren't smart enough, or because it was a cultural thing...

He ties to God's design that was revealed to humanity way back in the Garden of Eden.

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Men we have been called to lead, and there is huge responsibility that comes with that.

Notice here in our main text in Eph. 4 - the Lord has a lot more to say to the men? And then after addressing children, Paul comes back to the fathers again in v.4.

There will be a lot of men at the judgment hanging their heads for failing to be the spiritual leader of their family that God has called them to.

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\*Sadly if it weren't for many moms, the children wouldn't be learning the Bible at home.

\*The family wouldn't be in church.

Dad's it is our job to lead the charge for Sunday School, family devotion, being active in the church.

Look at who the main challenge is given to at the end of 6:4?

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**Young girl that is close with our family** that lives in the Jacksonville area was having a discussion with one of our children about homosexuality...

The girl said your parents raised you different... My mom says that gay is okay.

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Parents – our kids ought not have a value system based on dad & mom, but on the Bible that mom & dad point them to.

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*Stop & listen* to your wives men...sometimes body language and reading between the lines can go a long way.

For many guys ---its hobbies or career that get placed before the wife and kids. (*sometimes wives to*).

Stop & listen to your kids & wives? Are they longing for time with you.

Sure we can't always fill all their needs, but there needs to be a healthy balance.

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Christ sacrificed for us, and the model we are to show is we are willing to die to self for our families.

One of the saddest things I see these days is people chasing money at the expense of their children.

It **isn't** nicer things our kids need more of, it is us.

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**2<sup>nd</sup> after we stop & listen– Stop & Consider**

A-what 's at stake

Regret, hurt, great danger of falling into sin, temptation, ,...

B-what are the consequences – Potential loss

(guilt, potential of chastening, loss of testimony, loss of family).

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Protect your families & marriages!

*I see married people flirting, dressing to impress in the wrong ways*

(Looking for attention – not getting it at home).

These days -Fixation on body – half of these gyms- filled with mirrors, half dressed people.

Obsession with the body.

Lead down a wrong road if not careful.

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Another danger is that there seems to be a greater tolerance these days by believers because of societal impact on sexual immorality....

Listen to what Paul says...1 Corinthians 5:9-13..<sup>9</sup> I wrote to you in my epistle not to keep company with sexually immoral people. <sup>10</sup> Yet *I certainly did not mean* with the sexually immoral people of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. <sup>11</sup> But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner—not even to eat with such a person. <sup>12</sup> For what *have I to do* with judging those also who are outside? Do you not judge those who are inside? <sup>13</sup> But those who are outside God judges. Therefore “put away from yourselves the evil person.”<sup>[d]</sup>

(This applies fornication, homo, & adultery)

If we sin as it is, we will be less likely to jump in.

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A lot of accepting of sin these days even by those not in it.

Told to disassociate. To not do so seems to be to condone.

\*When we tolerate serious sin, act like it's no big deal, or give up on our commitments what is it teaching the next generation?

*When we come to Christ it is a serious decision and commitment.*

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Our life isn't about our glory but His Testimony

Sometimes suffering is part of this life.  
marriage.

There will be challenges in

It is to be entered into with a serious commitment.

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These days...People changing spouses like they change clothes.

*Mat 19:3-11* And Pharisees came up to him and tested him by asking, "Is it lawful to divorce one's wife for any cause?"<sup>4</sup> He answered, "Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female,<sup>5</sup> and said, 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'?<sup>6</sup> So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate."<sup>7</sup> They said to him, "Why then did Moses command one to give a certificate of divorce and to send her away?"<sup>8</sup> He said to them, "Because of your hardness of heart Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so.<sup>9</sup> And I say to you: whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery."<sup>10</sup> The disciples said to him, "If such is the case of a man with his wife, it is better not to marry."<sup>11</sup> But he said to them, "Not everyone can receive this saying, but only those to whom it is given. The disciples understood the seriousness of Jesus standard. In those days many didn't hold marriage commitment at the level God calls one to.

A\*What is the message we send to our kids when we give up?

*A lot of what our kids learn from marriage – they will learn from us.*

a-Let them see you treat 1 another with respect & love.

b-They ought to see you being sweet to each other.

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**For better or worse means**

hope for the best, understand the worst may be a reality & be committed to our vow..

God sends tests – tests show where we are at.

*Psalm 76:11-Make your vows to the LORD your God and perform them; ...*

Not always easy, but if it were easy everyone would be doing it.

*Ecclesiastes 5:4-6 When you vow a vow to God, do not delay paying it, for he has no pleasure in fools. Pay what you vow. 5 It is better that you should not vow than that you should vow and not pay. 6 Let not your mouth lead you into sin, and do not say before the messenger that it was a mistake.*

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Not only should we stop & listen, and stop & consider...

### **3- Stop & Do**

**God's Word is clear here what we are to do.**

- 1-Husbands submit to Christ in all things.
- 2-Wives submit to your husband in all things.
- 3-Children submit to parents

\*Just as the child has no excuse to **forfeit their role**, neither does the wife or the husband.

\*What happens when **1 link in the chain of submission** is consistently breaking down? Great chance of collapse's.

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When **1 person in the relationship isn't doing their role**, the other isn't excused from doing theirs!

After addressing the submission slaves are to have towards their masters (whether bad slave owners or good)

*Peter writes this...1Pet 3:1-7 Likewise, wives (even if you husband is a knucklehead), be subject to your own husbands, so that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives,2 when they see your respectful and pure conduct.3 Do not let your adorning be external-the braiding of hair and the putting on of gold jewelry, or the clothing you wear-4 but let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God's sight is very precious.5 For this*

*is how the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves, by submitting to their own husbands,<sup>6</sup> as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord. And you are her children, if you do good and do not fear anything that is frightening.<sup>7</sup> Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.*

*\*Men – if we aren't faithful - Prayers hindered*

**Our spouses should be a great concern to us.**

Eph 5:28 – Men love your wives as yourself.

Eph 5:33 – wives respect your husbands.

*Instead of looking for the easy road look, for the right road.*

My prayer is all of you in here have fabulous marriages & families.

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It will not happen though unless God's Word is our guiding plan.

If your family or marriage isn't where it needs to be, today is the day to do something about it before one day you look back with regrets and hurt.

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There is not much worse than seeing families & couples hurting or split up.

I hate seeing kids going from **house to house** on different weekends, here and there on the holidays, that isn't God's perfect plan.

If you are here today and you have made some mistakes in your past & truly repented then it's under the blood. Don't carry guilt, but guard that it doesn't happen again.

But if you are here and **there's still time for reconciliation** then make it happen. Stop & go do it.

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**Men** – take hold of the reins of being the spiritual leader of your family.

**Ladies** – be the supporter God has called you to.

**Kids, Teens** – respect your parents in all things. (Repent).