

BLUEPRINTS: The Design: Foundationsⁱ
Genesis 1:26-28; Matthew 7:24-27

INTRODUCTION:

Good morning, church family. I want to say a special welcome to those of you that are guests today. Thank you for entrusting us with your Sunday. It is our prayer that our church already feels like home to you.

We love to connect with our guests. We would ask you to text the keyword, TBCMP, which stands for Trinity Baptist Church Mt. Pleasant, to the number 94-000. Just follow the instructions from there.

Or you can stop by Guest Connect located in the lobby. We have a team that would like to meet you and give you a gift as a way of saying thank you for being with us this morning. We have purchased new gifts that I think is pretty cool. And I will make my way there as well and I look forward to shaking your hand this morning.

UPDATES:

Before we jump into our message this morning, I just want to make mention of a couple updates. First, I wanted to bring a report and update about our Next40 initiative. Last August, we launched this initiative to make enhancements to our facility to position us to reach the next generation for Christ over the next 40 years. Phase 1 included the replacement and enhancement of our kids playground, the renovation of the Quad into a Kids Worship Center, and enhanced safety measures in the kids wing. That phase has been completed.

Phase 2 involves enhancing our Student Ministry area and includes Audio, video, and lighting overhaul as well as the expansion of the back patio into a basketball court.

Since we launched this initiative a year ago, you have given \$453,080! Isn't that awesome?! As a result of your generosity, we were able to pay cash for Phase 1. And we have \$79,528 remaining in the Next40 account. The total estimated cost of Phase 2 is about \$110,000. So, we are so close to being able to execute all aspects of Phase 2.

But, due of the growth of our Student Ministry, the continual expansion of our Student Worship Team, and the challenge that the current equipment presents

each and every week, our elders have determined to proceed with the replacement of the audio, video and lighting portion of Phase 2 in the Student Center. While we are awaiting final and updated bids, we are able to pay cash for that portion of Phase 2. Again, because of your generosity and faithfulness.

So, thank you, church family, for investing in reaching the next generation! Can we celebrate that together? If you want to help us cross the finish line, you can continue to designate gifts to the Next40 initiative. We want to finish Phase 2 and complete that basketball court outside of the Student Center.

I also want to take this opportunity to brag on our staff who are leading so well in ministering to your kids. Did you know, that we had, preschool, kids, and students, a total of 178 kids on campus this past Wednesday?! How awesome is that? That's a lot of kids! But that also means it requires a lot of volunteers. I want to ask you to truly consider helping out by volunteering in one of our ministry areas on Wednesday nights. We need you as The Lord is sending kids our way! Please visit with our staff on ways you can partner with us in sharing the hope of Jesus to the next generation. Thanks for allowing me to give that update.

SERIES OVERVIEW:

Today we launch a new teaching series! One that I hope is helpful and impactful for you and your family. We are calling this series Blueprints: Building Families by God's Design. Over the next several weeks, we are going to look at God's design and purpose for the family, the power of prayer, investing in a healthy marriage, developing discipline with your kids, instilling a positive self-esteem in your family, how to counter the culture we live in, principles for healthy communication, encountering challenges, and leaving a lasting legacy. I hope you are a part of each week.

Today we are going to press into God's design for family, the foundation on which we are to build our families. Understanding that the structure that is built will not look the same for all of us, but the foundation must be solid and established according to God's design. So, I want to invite you to take your Bible and turn with me to two places. We are going to be in Genesis, chapter 1, and then in Matthew, chapter 7. So, hold your place there in Matthew as we begin in Genesis 1.

OPENING ILLUSTRATION: Favorite Family Sit-Coms

I want to start today with a little pop quiz this morning. This is an all skate, that meaning that we all get to participate. Here's what we are going to do. I am going to play a portion of a theme song from a family sit-com and I want you guys to shout out what show it belongs to. You got it?! Those of you joining us online, you can play, too, by typing in the name of the sit-com there in the comments. Are you guys ready for this? Okay, first one [Andy Griffith Show]. Okay, good job. What about this one? [Happy Days]. Alright! How many of you can guess this one? [Brady Bunch]. A few more in on the game that time. What about this one? [Fresh Prince]. You pagans! Just kidding. One more. Can you guess this one? [Saved by the Bell]. Great job! Give yourselves a round of applause.

I could play that game all day long. Some of my personal favorite shows were Growing Pains. Anyone with me on that? Any Family Matters fans out there? Steve Urkel. Full House? So many great family sitcoms from back in the day. Our oldest daughter, Carsyn, is an old soul. She loves watching Little House on the Prairie and the Dick VanDyke show.

But the thing that I think is interesting is how we are drawn to family. Those shows didn't paint a perfect family, free from dealing with issues and dysfunction. But it promoted a togetherness that in many ways is missing from our culture today.

So, I think that as we seek to be a people that experience the blessing of God in our families' lives, however imperfect they are, we must, as a culture, a society, align our lives to God's design. And that's what this series is all about.

Now, you might be here today and say, "Well, I'm single so what's the point of being a part of this teaching series." To that I would say that when God was creating the foundations of the world, He began with a single person. He didn't begin with marriage.ⁱⁱ Now, we are left to assume that Eve came along fairly quickly, but my point is that there is purpose in singlehood. And how you allow God to begin to form these principles in you now, is developing a biblical foundation, groundwork, for what He has in store for your future.

Maybe you're here today and you are saying, "Well, Pastor Chris, my family is a mess. I don't fit the mold of a nuclear family. My family is broken. So, I'm automatically upside down of what God's Word says." Well, to that I would say that God is an amazing God. Full of grace, mercy, and reconciliation. It is God

that makes beauty from our ashes. And His purpose for you remains. Therefore, every message of this teaching series will be laced with a great deal of grace and mercy. And besides, show me a family that fits the perfection of what a family is supposed to be! They don't exist. And if they do, that family needs to preach this series, not me.

Maybe you're here today and your approach to this teaching series is that it doesn't apply to you because you are past the formative years of your family. Maybe you are an empty nester. But I would say these messages are vitally important to you. I think our world is in desperate need of those who have gone before us, to invest in us, that we might live principles you've learned.

So, wherever you are in your family, let me share with you my prayer for putting together this series. First, it comes as a result of a think tank we assembled months ago to listen to felt needs in our church. The topics we are going to address are topics that consistently come up in conversation. Secondly, the goal of this teaching series is to point us to God's design for our families and to build our families on those principles. Simply put, God's ways are best. His design is for our good. And when we align our lives to His ways, we experience His blessing. So, with that background, let's jump here this morning.

MESSAGE:

You know, every building has a blueprint. A design plan that serves as a guide that when adhered to ensures stability, safety and longevity of what is being built. Well, God's Word, in that sense, is a blueprint for families to follow. And it is usually when we lose sight of the blueprint, and we start trying to construct things according to our own plan, that we run into trouble. I believe we find ourselves in a culture and a society today that is trying to operate according to their own design plan. But one that is in desperate need of returning to God's design for our families. So, the first thing that we need to consider is...

1) The Foundation.

God's design for family is foundational. In the very first book of the Bible, Genesis, we see God's design for family. I find it not at random that God built family into the fabric of Creation. The question is, why?

God has established 3 institutions. The family, government, and The Church. And the family was God's first institution designed to be the foundation of society and civilization. And just as the foundation of a building determines the

stability of what is built on it, the family is God's foundation for human flourishing and the stability of every generation.

As a result of the family being the first and greatest institution of God, for our good, the other two institutions are designed to support the benefit of the first. Meaning government's role is to protect the family as designed by God. The church's role is to disciple us to be able to live according to God's design. And when we live according to God's design, we are recipients of His blessings.

So, look with me at Genesis 1, verses 26-28 as we see the family woven into the fabric of Creation. ***26**Then **God said**, "**Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.**" **27**So **God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.** **28**And God blessed them. And God said to them, "**Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.**"*

A couple of things to point out in this passage, things that are important to the foundation of the family. First, is to see God's value of humanity. It is important to see that from the outset. That is the reason God gives blueprints for life. Because He cares for that which is most valuable to Him.

We learn that we are made in the image of God. When you read the creation narrative, in Genesis chapter 1, no other creation of God is made in His image, only humans. That means humanity, from the womb to the tomb, regardless of ability or disability, bears the very image of God. And as a result, God desires to protect and promote His image in the world. That is foundational to understand.

Secondly, we see the definition of marriage and family. God created male and female. Now, Genesis 1 is a summary of creation. God makes male and female in His image. And Genesis 2 outlines the sequence of creation.ⁱⁱⁱ Adam is created first, formed from the dust of the earth. Then Eve, fashioned from the rib of Adam. After that, God performed the first wedding. He untied Adam (male) and Eve (female). Because marriage is the first step to establishing a family, and family is the foundation of society. Apart from a man and a woman

bound by a covenant relationship in marriage, there is not the ability to achieve God's design to be fruitful and multiply. That is foundational.

The third thing we see is how Adam and Eve are equal in value, but distinct in role and purpose. Male and female, God created, again both in His image. As a result, both men and women have equal and immense value. Equality of value in the Scriptures is never in question.

But we do see the distinction of roles all throughout the Scriptures. For example, Adam is created first. It is Adam that names the animals, a cultural identification of authority.^{iv} To name something is to have authority over it. God told Adam not to eat the fruit of the tree in the Garden. Eve wasn't around yet. Now, we know Adam told Eve about that command because she repeated it to the serpent. But also, God holds Adam accountable for the sin of his wife in Genesis 3. Even though, Eve ate of the fruit first, God held Adam responsible. Why? Because it was Adam's responsibility to lead, spiritually and physically.

Fellas, that, when applied to the family, means that you and I are responsible for our family. We are to take the position of leadership for the benefit of our family. But I think, if we are honest, we tend to believe the nurture and care for the family is primarily the mom's job. But the Scripture doesn't paint that picture. Dads, we are the ones that will be held accountable for our families. It is not solely our wife's role to care for and be concerned about our children. Our family is to be our first priority. That's the way God designed it. That's in the blueprint.

And we've seen the results of absent and uninvolved fathers in our society, haven't we? According to a study I read this week, when a child is raised in a father-absent home, they are at a greater risk of poverty, more likely to have behavioral problems, more likely to go to prison, more likely to abuse drugs, and more likely to drop out of school.^v There were many more affects listed, I just hit the highlights. These are symptoms of a society where dads have abdicated their role and priority. Now, I am not saying that if you are a single mom you are doomed. Please don't hear that. God works in and through even the messy areas of our lives. Amen?.

Now, understanding all the foundational matters is important. God's design is for our good. But what our society is experiencing is not God's good design, is it? Why do we not experience God's perfect design? Sin.

We live in a culture that has redefined marriage. It has attacked the roles of biblical manhood and womanhood. But that is not God's original design, and anything outside of God's design leads to brokenness. Again, not talking value. I'm talking roles, for our benefit and flourishing. But because culture has sought the redefinition of these roles, chaos and confusion proves we are experiencing cracks in the foundation of our society.

Listen, anything God creates, Satan wants to destroy.^{vi} That's true of the church and true of creation. It is certainly true of your family and mine. And because the foundation of society is the family, Satan, in his pursuit to destroy God's creation, has made the family his primary target. Why? Because if you can destroy the foundation, you can destroy society. That's why you and I feel it. It's why we feel the tension and why we experience the conflict.

Ephesians 6, one of my favorites to turn to when pastorally counseling couples, says that we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the authorities, principalities and rulers in the heavenly places. The war on the family is a spiritual one, attacking the foundations of society. It is manifesting physically but must be fought spiritually. And while Satan's attacks receive applause in today's culture, it is God's design that is ultimately for our good. Therefore, we fight for our families.

Beloved, we must see our families as the means to which God builds a healthy society. People thrive in healthy families. But people crumble in chaos. It is our responsibility to seek to live according to God's design for the blessing of our family and the blessing of generations to come.

Let me show you this in Scripture. Later in Genesis, God chooses Abraham to bring about a great nation. A society built upon the strong foundation of God's Word. And we see the necessity of the family in that pursuit. Genesis, 18:19, ***19For I have chosen him, that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord by doing righteousness and justice, [Why?] so that the Lord may bring to Abraham what he has promised him.***

God wants to bless you and your family. God wants to bless our society. But we cannot expect God's blessings apart from surrender to His design. It is a choice we make to ensure God's blessings both now and in the future. It is a choice we make to build according to God's design as laid out in The Bible.

When it comes to our families, a solid foundation is vital because it leads to...

2) Stability.

A firm foundation is critical for durability. Flip over to Matthew chapter 7. Let's read verses 24 through 27. ***24"Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. 25And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. 26And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. 27And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it."*** We understand the meaning behind this teaching. It is important to build our lives on the firm foundation of God's Word.

But I want to talk about the storm in this passage. Because this is important. We tend to think that if we build our lives centered on The Lord, we go to church all the time, we give of our time, talents, and treasure, that we will somehow be exempt from the elements of the storm. But that's not the case. Notice that the storm that the wise person faced was the exact storm that the foolish person faced.

Listen, in this world, we will go through storms. No matter how biblically centric your family is, you will face challenges. So, the difference is not the storm, the difference is the foundation that we build on. When we build our lives according to God's blueprint, we develop a "come what may," kind of family.

It doesn't matter what happens. It doesn't matter if we have an argument. It doesn't matter if I lose my job. It doesn't matter if our finances are a wreck. It doesn't matter what happens to the economy. It doesn't matter what happens medically. Nothing matters. Come what may, we've already made the decision that we are going to go through that battle together. That is the result of building a family on the rock, the solid rock of God's design.

Some of you, you've experienced the other side of that equation. Your family fell with a great crash. And why? Because the family wasn't built upon the rock.

The question is how do we build on the rock? What are some practical steps we can take to ensure our foundation is rooted in Jesus? I want to mention 2 things. I know there are others, but we have time for that in this series.

1) Decide.

The first thing we must do in order to build according to God's plan is to decide to follow His lead. You have to decide on a blueprint. To build a godly family, we must decide to allow Jesus to be Lord of our family. I know that sounds overly simplistic, but I want you to follow me for a moment.

We all have an authority in our lives. The thing or person by which our lives are led. For some, that authority is themselves, or a political party, or a particular celebrity. But to allow them to be the authority in our lives is to build our lives upon that. And if it is anything but Jesus, I'm telling you, it's sand.

We have to make a choice to align our thinking according to God's Word. And that means that when God's view differs from mine, I'm wrong. We have come to a recognition that God's ways are best and ultimately for our good. As a result, God is the first and foremost and we align our lives to Scripture.

ILLUSTRATION: Stack of books^{vii}

Let me see if I can illustrate it this way. Imagine you are trying to walk with a giant stack of books. As you navigate your way, you are going to encounter some obstacles. Maybe you miss a step or stub your toe. What's going to happen to those books? They are going to topple over. Well, once the books have all fallen, what are you going to be holding on to? Most likely the book that was at the bottom of the stack. You might hold onto the 1 or 2 stacked on top of that. But all the other books are going to fall.

Well, for the sake of the illustration, the pile of the books represent the pile of priorities in our lives. To have your foundation upon the rock means that when everything else falls, we're holding onto Jesus. He's the base.

But truth be told, we hold onto other priorities. We have hobbies, kids sports, my job. All sorts of things vying for priority space. You know that Jesus is your foundation when all that topples over you are holding onto Him.

When something has to get cut, you know it can't be Jesus. That's what it means to decide to build your family upon the rock. Secondly,...

2) Grow.

If we want a family built upon the rock of Jesus, we have to decide to grow together in Him. In other words, we need to all pull one another toward Jesus.

It is important to know, as a family, what direction we are all headed. Those that are seeking to build upon the bedrock of Jesus are those that are committed to pulling spiritual weight together.

Let me explain how this plays out. In a lot of families, you will have one parent that's, quote, "the spiritual one." Not to say that their spouse is not a believer or not spiritually minded. But in a lot of cases, there's one that is the dominant spiritual figure in the home. And usually, what often happens, is only one is pulling spiritually speaking.

Sometimes I see kids coming to church with just one parent. Now, I know there are circumstances that make that the only option. But listen, to have a family built on the rock of Jesus requires both parents pulling in the same direction. Dads, let me just talk to you for just a moment because I believe God's call on our lives is to be the spiritual leaders of the home. Listen, don't force your wife to be the spiritual one. Grow and lead your wife and pull with her and kids toward Jesus.

That's where we're going to leave it today. It is important to give attention to the foundation that we are building on. God has a design and it is for our good. And when we align our lives to His plan, we find stability, not exemption from life's storms, but stability in the midst of them. We have to decide to follow God here. We have to make a commitment to grow together.

CONCLUSION:

[3 Circles]

Have you been born again unto a relationship with Jesus Christ? If not, today can be that day. Our elders will be here.

Maybe you have a prayer need that you'd like our elders to help you carry.

Maybe you want to bring your family to this altar and begin today to align your life to God's design. [PRAY]

ENDNOTES:

ⁱ Works consulted in preparation for this message: David Platt, *Christ-Centered Exposition: Exalting Jesus in Matthew*, Holman: Nashville, 2013; John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: Matthew 1-7*, Moody: Chicago, 1985; Wayne Grudem, *Bible Doctrine: Essential Teachings of the Christian Faith*, Zondervan: Grand Rapids, 1999; Leo Garrett, *Systematic Theology: Biblical, Historical, and Evangelical Volume 1*, BIBAL: North Richland Hills, 2000; Erwin Lutzer, "Rebuilding the Foundations," sermon preached at The Moody Church, July 29, 2019, accessed online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5s7OOhLHFgo>; Tony Evans, "God and Family," sermon published by The Urban Alternative, accessed online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dsNimVk08e4>; Matt Ousdahl, "The Foundation of Every Family," sermon preached at Arundel Christian Church, accessed online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=39CPMWh0oQ>; Jack Graham, "Celebrating The Family," published by PowerPoint Ministries, accessed online: <https://www.oneplace.com/ministries/powerpoint/listen/celebrating-the-family-1177547.html>.

ⁱⁱ Evans.

ⁱⁱⁱ Lutzer.

^{iv} Ibid.

^v "Statistics Tell The Story: Fathers Matter," article published by the National Fatherhood Initiative, accessed online: <https://www.fatherhood.org/father-absence-statistic#:~:text=According%20to%20the%20U.S.%20Census%20Bureau%2C%2019.5%20million%20children%2C%20more.a%20father%20in%20the%20home.>

^{vi} Ousdahl.

^{vii} Illustration borrowed from matt Ousdahl.