

CITYWEST CHURCH

06.09.2026 - 10 AM - FATHER'S DAY 2026

FAMILY MATTERS #1 - THE CLIMATE OF OUR HOUSE.

For every house is built by someone, but He who built all things is God.

Hebrews 3:4 (NKJV)

Moses was a member of the house of God, but Christ is the owner. No house is greater than its owner.

"Man i supposed to live in a house, but what happens with the house lives in him?"
- Koyama

"So fear the LORD and serve him wholeheartedly. Put away forever the idols your ancestors worshiped when they lived beyond the Euphrates River and in Egypt. Serve the LORD alone. ¹⁵ But if you refuse to serve the LORD, then choose today whom you will serve. Would you prefer the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates? Or will it be the gods of the Amorites in whose land you now live? **But as for me and my family, we will serve the LORD.**"

Joshua 24:14-15 (NLT)

Happy Father's Day, we are starting a new series this month looking at all things family. And today we are looking at the atmosphere of our homes.

Think of the idea that you can't control the temperature outside, but you can adjust the thermostat in your home. This is not just an air con analogy; it's true for the atmosphere of homes.

Families have become the punching bag of society over the last 30 years, but the Bible gives us the picture that families play a vital role in the church community and into the wider community.

Mary Pipher, in her book on families, The Shelter of Each Other, she says

"Families are our shelter from the storm, our oldest and most precious institution, and our last great hope."

Adam and Eve, on the opening pages of the Bible, are the first family; before anything else, the family unit was established.

Someone is setting the climate of your home and your heart.

The question for us all to consider this Father's Day is what kind of climate am I creating?

1. EVERY HOUSE HAS A CENTRE.

Joshua 24 is one of those great moments in Scripture. Joshua is old, Israel has entered the promised land, and the people have seen God do incredible things.

Joshua gathers up the people and challenges them,

Choose this day whom you will serve.

Why this strong warning? They have reached the promised land; they were home free.

But Joshua knew that the land was promised, but the temptations remained.

The promised land was located between two of the world's superpowers of the day, Egypt and Babylon. Its geography meant it was surrounded by temptation and then there were the people in the promise land.

- Joshua 24:2-4 shows that on the other side of the Euphrates were the gods of Sumerian and Babylonian culture – gods of heritage.
- Joshua 24:5-7a shows that on the other side of the Red Sea were the gods of ancient Egypt – gods of upbringing.
- Joshua 24:7b-13 and 24:15 shows that as they crossed the Jordan there were the gods of the Amorites – gods of the culture.

Joshua applied the principle. The LORD God of Israel is greater than all these idols; therefore, serve the LORD!

He goes on to say:

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

“The English uses a future tense here, but the Hebrew tense has a fuller meaning. It expresses continuous action. It involves the future, but it can also point to the past. Joshua was undoubtedly affirming, ‘I have chosen, and I will choose.’”

Before faith can be generational, it has to be personal.

Joshua says as for me first.

Dads that's where we need to start. Not with the outside challenges and the pressure of the outside world, but as the question, Am I serving the Lord?

Think about a compass.

A compass doesn't simply tell you where you are.

It tells you where you're going.

And your home needs a compass.

Joshua says: “As for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.”

He's saying: This is our direction. This is who we belong to. This is what our house is built around.

2. THE CLIMATE OF OUR HOUSE IS FORMED BY WHAT YOU LIVE.

This is where Father's Day becomes particularly important.

Eugene Peterson once said:

“I was never going to treat my parishioners better than I treated my family.”

That's confronting. This is not just for pastors, it can co workers others in our world.

Because Peterson understood something:

Your home sees the real you.

Church sees the Sunday version. Work sees the professional version. Friends see the social version.

But your family sees: The tired you. The frustrated you. The impatient you. The joyful you. The stressed you. The real you.

Your family is not an interruption to your spiritual life.

Your family is one of the primary places where God is forming you to become like Jesus.

Your children are watching

*We often think discipleship is something we do **to our children**.*

*But biblical discipleship is something God does **in the whole household**.*

Your children are watching: How you handle conflict. How you respond when you're wrong. Whether you apologise. How you talk about people.

How you respond when plans don't go your way. What happens when you're disappointed. What happens when you're successful.

How you respond when someone hurts you.

*And they're learning: **"This is what following Jesus looks like."***

"Listen, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD alone. ⁵ And you must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your strength. ⁶ And you must commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these commands that I am giving you today. ⁷ Repeat them again and again to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are on the road, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up. ⁸ Tie them to your hands and wear them on your forehead as reminders. ⁹ Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 (NLT)

Notice the order.

Commit yourselves.

Then:

Teach your children.

The faith moves:

From the heart → into the home → into everyday life.

The first sermon your children hear is your life

Martin Luther spoke about parents as spiritual leaders of the household.

*He famously described parents as “**apostles, bishops, and priests**” to their children.*

That's a huge challenge. Because you don't need a platform to have a ministry.

You may already have your most important congregation sitting around your dinner table.

Your children don't need a perfect father. They need a father who is genuinely following Jesus.

They need to see you say:

“I got that wrong.” “I'm sorry.” “Will you forgive me?” “Let's pray about this.”

“I don't know what to do, but I know who we can trust.”

That's discipleship.

3. EVERY HOUSE NEEDS A DECLARATION

Joshua doesn't merely describe his household.

He makes a declaration.

“As for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.”

That's a decision.

Because culture is going to disciple your family whether you intentionally disciple them or not.

Your children are going to learn what matters.

They're going to learn how to treat people.

They're going to learn what success means.

They're going to learn what marriage looks like.

They're going to learn what God is like.

*The question is: **From whom?***

We have to decide what kind of house we're going to build

Joshua says: “As for me...”

*In other words: **We are going to decide what kind of household we're going to be.***

*Not perfect. **Faithful.** Not impressive. **Christ-centred.***

*Not a house where everyone gets everything right. **A house where grace is normal.***

So what does that actually look like?

A Christ-centred home is a home where:

Prayer is normal. Not because we're super spiritual, but because we know we need God.

Apology is normal. Parents say: **"I'm sorry."**

Forgiveness is normal. We don't keep score.

Scripture is normal. God's Word isn't just something we hear on Sunday.

Serving is normal.

We don't ask: **"What can I get?"**

We ask: **"How can I help?"**

Worship is normal. Not just on Sunday.

Jesus becomes part of everyday conversation.

Hospitality is normal. Our home isn't just for us.

It's a place where other people can experience the love of God.

Rest is normal. We don't allow busyness to become our master.

Presence is normal. We put the phone down.

FOR THE DADS TODAY:

The invitation today isn't to become a perfect father.

It's to become a surrendered man.

Because God doesn't need you to manufacture a perfect family.

He wants to form a family that knows: Jesus is Lord.

FOR EVERYONE ELSE TODAY:

Joshua didn't start when he had a family, he was like this from childhood, he slept out the front of the tabernacle in Exodus, making it clear his statement As for me wasnt just because he was a father but because he was a follower.

CONNECT GROUP QUESTIONS

- 1. People often learn more from what we *do* than what we say. What is one aspect of your everyday life that you hope the people around you would see as an example of following Jesus?**
- 2. Joshua said, “*As for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.*” What would it look like for you to intentionally make Jesus the centre of your life this week — at home, at work, in your friendships, or wherever God has placed you?**
- 3. Joshua said as for me, before we get to our house, we must reflect on as for me. How does that look in your world and how do you share what Jesus is doing in you to those around you?**