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LOVE WHERE YOU LIVE

Part 1 – Home

Home is a special place. It has always been a place where we share life, love, and laughter ... where all learn what it means to love God and others where we raise the next generation to know and love God.

I love these quotes about what home is ...

- “Home is the starting place of love, hope and dreams.”
- “In this home... We do second chances. We do real. We do mistakes. We do I'm sorrys. We do loud really well. We do hugs. We do together best of all.”
- “Home is where love resides, memories are created, friends always belong, and laughter never ends.”
- “A house is made of bricks and beams. A home is made of hopes and dreams.”
- “There's no place like home.”
- “Home is a shelter from storms-**all sorts of storms.**”- William J. Bennett (He was secretary of education under Ronald Regan and author of many books on morals, virtues and education)

On my entry way wall is the scripture ... Proverb 24:3-4

By **wisdom** a house is built, and by **understanding** it is established; by **knowledge** the rooms are filled with all **precious** and **pleasant** riches. Proverbs 24:3–4

Homes are both physical and spiritual.

King David prayed for a spiritual blessing over both his physical and spiritual house.

*Now therefore may it please you to **bless the house of your servant**, so that it may continue forever before you. For you, O Lord GOD, have spoken, and with your blessing shall the house of your servant be blessed forever.”* 2 Samuel 7:29

For King David, it was recognizing God's plan and purpose for all that he had. God was at work and in control and David could pray boldly for a blessing over the things that God was providing and in control of.

So here is the principle ...

God **Blesses** What He **Possesses**!

It begins right where we live ... saying to God here is my life, my family, my house, my home, everything ...

Joshua told Israel and God made sure it was written down for all ...

*... **choose this day whom you will serve**, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. **But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.***"

Joshua

24:15

A house or home in both the OT and NT was more than the physical structure ... it was everything that about where you lived. It was family, food, finances, future ... **it was the place from which the seed of life sprouted and bore fruit ...**

In the new testament it's called an oikos – household. I want God to take all that he has given me and bless it – that is to – speak favor or purpose or provision or something. You can't bless yourself. Words are powerful things that we use to bless or curse. We all want God to speak blessing over us, to speak on our behalf, to speak over us his love, purpose and truth ... there is so much blessing in scripture ... so many words that have been spoken over you ... you who belong to God.

This process of giving to God, asking for blessing and sharing with others is found in one of my favorite stories in the bible is the feeding of the five thousand in **Matthew 14:13-21**

¹³ Now when Jesus heard this, he withdrew from there in a boat to a desolate place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns. ¹⁴ When he went ashore he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion on them and healed their sick. ¹⁵ Now when it was evening, the **disciples came to him and said**, "This is a desolate place, and the day is now over; send the crowds away to go into the villages and buy food for themselves." ¹⁶ But Jesus said, "**They need not go away; you give them something to eat.**" ¹⁷ They said to him, "**We have only five loaves here and two fish.**" ¹⁸ And he said, "**Bring them here to me.**" ¹⁹ Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass, and taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and **said a blessing**. Then he broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. ²⁰ And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up twelve baskets full of the broken pieces left over. ²¹ And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

Step one – open your hand and give all that you have to God.

Step two – ask God to bless what is his.

Step three – share what he has given you.

Step four – watch what he does and give him the glory.

The problem is that too often ...

I want the **return** without any **investment**.

I want the **crop** without ever **planting** a single seed.

... whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. 2 Corinthians 9:6

That's just a principle in life ... a process that works with all of life. Your money, time, relationships and your yes even your **home**!

Where you live, your home, is ground **zero** from which life and love emanate.

- Do you want God to bless your home, your family? Your neighbor and your relationship with your neighbor? Your community?

The truth is ... I can be pretty apathetic at times. I know that God has given me so much, and I am thankful but I am not always actively seeking God on how he would use all that I have given him and all that he has blessed me with. Especially when it comes to **loving right where I live**.

The opposite of love is not hate ... it's **apathy**.

Apathy – a lack of feeling, emotion, interest or concern about something.

Sometimes, I just don't care. Not because I don't really care as much as I am just caring about other things more. I get **distracted** and therefore **disinterested**.

I am so glad that **Jesus didn't get distracted or disinterested** in the Father's redemptive purpose for his life.

This morning we are going to take communion together. This is time to remember what God did on our behalf. How Jesus gave all that he had, it was blessed and shared to give life to a dead world.

Communion is a great picture of giving, blessing and sharing.

(take communion together)

Your home is a light in the storm, it is an invitation to others to experience a God of love and peace.

First - give it all God.

Second - ask his blessing over all that is His.

Third - share his provision and blessing with others.

How can you love where you live with it this week?

Here are two ideas:

First, this is really easy.

1. **Put some chairs in the front yard.** And this week spend one or two or as many as you can in the front yard. Put out some extra chairs, 6 feet apart, sit outside with your favorite beverage and watch what God does.

Here's what gets real fun about this. There are about a dozen churches around Katy and West Houston who have said they were going to join us in this project. In those churches, there are over 10,000 members. That's about 3000 households – and if each of us just shared the love of God to 4 neighbors, that's 12,000 households, or 40000 people who will be blessed in this season! 12,000 homes would have access to the love of Jesus - with something that costs no money or resources. It's just a matter of taking Jesus at His word.

Second, many of you will or have received a check from the government as a part of the Cares Recovery Act. This is a good thing and a helpful thing for many. For some of you, you will need every penny to feed your family or to make up for lost income. **But for the rest of us, what if we did this:**

1. open our hands and say this is yours God.
2. ask God to bless to it.
3. give 10% as a tithe and then take 10% and give it away to someone in need. So if you got \$2,400 or more if you have kids, that \$240+ tithe and \$240+ share and \$1,920+ to provide for whatever you need.
4. Share that \$240+ to help a neighbor you find has a need, to buy food for KCM, or to make masks or to use to make something more to help more people. Or give the whole amount to a single mom or dad that just lost their job. **It could be really fun to gather your children together** and practice what we have learned this morning ... give to God, ask him to bless what is his, share with others, watch what he does in you and other. Pray about how to bless others with what you have given to God, as for his blessing and are going to share with others.

In the Numbers, the Lord told Moses to tell Aaron, to pray a prayer of blessing over Israel. I want to ask the Lord to bless all that you have given him this morning and that he would use it for your blessing and the blessing of your neighbor.

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.
Numbers 6:24–26

Amen