

* **A Beautiful Example
of Fearless Submission**
I Peter 3:5, 6

* **The Better Life to Come**
Ecclesiastes 7:1

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* **The Prevailing Promise**
Isaiah 41:10

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as it is revealed in the cross of Calvary.”

Let us lay hold of this promise. Let us lay hold of the prevailing promise of God, “Be not afraid, fear not, be not dismayed.” Will we distrust the omnipotent God? Shall we say, “His promise is not true?” Will the faithful God fail you?

The answer, of course, is No. In fact, to say “Yes” is blasphemy. Then we see that our fear is our unbelief. And to unbelief we must say, “Get thee hence, Satan. Thou honor-est not God.” Let us leave our fears. Our fears are painful and make us miserable. Our fears are weakening us and making us jump at shadows. Our fears are a dishonoring of God. It is not pious to doubt God. Lay hold of His prevailing promise: I am thy God; I will strengthen thee; I will uphold thee. That is the Word of God to you now in the situation in which His hand has led you this day.

Through faith in His promise we have comfort. Upon this promise God’s children have put the enemy to flight. God’s children have stood secure in this wonderful promise of God. It is no different for you and it is no different for me. God is with us. I am thy God, fear not nor be dismayed.

So there may be many obstacles, there may be many things that we do not understand. There may be many things that are simply too much; and, according to our estimation, tomorrow may look very dark to our eyes. But we know who holds tomorrow, who holds all things. We know the One who has said, “Fear thou not; I am thy God; I will be with thee; I will strengthen thee.”

Let us then lay hold of the prevailing promise of God.

Shall we pray.

Father in heaven, we thank Thee for Thy infallible Word, the Word that is above all true. We pray that the Holy Spirit may seal it to our hearts and engrave it upon our hearts, that we might confess this truth: Thou art our God who has promised never to forsake us and to help us always. We pray that we might possess that strength even today in the midst of every way of trial and difficulty. We ask that Thou wilt forgive us of our many sins. They are with us in all that we do. Oh, Lord, pity us. Give us, O Lord, to turn from our sins, and give us to believe and thus to honor Thy name. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

THE REFORMED WITNESS HOUR

August 4, 2013 *A Beautiful Example of Fearless Submission*
No. 3683 *Rev. Carl Haak*

Dear Radio Friends,

We will return for a final time today to our series on marriage, the family, and God’s covenant, focusing yet once more on what it means for a wife to be submissive to her husband. I have said many times in this series that we cannot say too often that marriage is to be the picture of Christ and the church, meaning that we, as husbands and wives, must mirror God’s covenant bond with us in our marriages. We do not want our marriage to lie, to leave the wrong impression. But we want it to leave the correct impression of what it means that Christ loves the church.

Jesus said, “Let your light so shine before men that they may glorify your Father which is in heaven.” If we are to do that, as husbands and wives, we must know our calling. Our calling as a husband is to exercise a wise, biblical headship over our wives. We are to look to Christ. We are to love our wives with a sacrificial love. We are to protect and provide for our families. And we saw last time that a wife is to submit to her own husband as unto the Lord. She is to take the picture of the

church’s subjection to Christ as being what she wants to mirror toward her husband. In other words, the calling of the wife is to leave a testimony before the world of what the church thinks of Jesus Christ, and of the great love that the church has for Jesus Christ.

We are going to look once more into the calling of the wife to submit. Today we are going to look at the Word of God in I Peter 3:5, 6. We read, “For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: Even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.”

Peter there is tracing out the roots of a wife’s wise submission to her husband. He says that it belongs to her very womanhood, as given by God. Because women, in Christ, are holy, they trust in God, and they adorn themselves with spiritual graces. Because that is the case with a woman, you will find that she also sees and follows her calling to be submis-

sive to her husband. So, if you are looking for the source of a wife's submission, and if you ask, "Where does this submission come from? What gives it its life? How do you explain this?" Peter responds: "You need to see Christian womanhood. You need to understand what it means to be a woman of God. The roots of a wife's submission are found there."

But before we look into those roots that Peter shows to us, let us note two things, if only briefly, in this Word of God. First, Peter is expressing the great purpose God has in the Old Testament Scriptures, as well as the New Testament, especially in the historical portions of those Scriptures. God's purpose is to give us examples (living, breathing, real examples) of redeeming grace. When you read the Old Testament Scriptures, do not immediately spiritualize. Do not think that you must find some hidden meaning behind every event. God is giving tangible, concrete examples of what it means to live by faith through grace. Do not read the Bible as a dated, ancient, long-ago book. But in the lives of the saints in both the Old and New Testaments, see that God is drawing a picture of what it means to live the life of grace.

And, secondly, let us see that Peter is saying to us that when he sets before us the call

of the wife to submit to her husband, he is not setting forth a novelty. When the Scriptures call the wife to submit to her husband, this is not something of a particular culture. Peter is saying that the Christian life is the same in all ages. The Christian life is not determined by what a society will bear, what an age will accept. But it is determined by the will of God in Holy Scripture. Each age has its own arrogance. Each age will say, "Issues, situations of our day, are different. We live in a global society. We have redefined the roles of husband and wife. We have redefined sexual orientation and morals. The Bible talks about women who wore sandals and carried water in clay pots and lived in tents and bowed before men. But that's not the way it is today." God says to that, "Don't talk arrogantly." In the book of Job, Job was asked, "How long have *you* been around, Job?" Likewise, God says regarding women, "This is My word. This is her beauty. This is her femininity. It involves also that in marriage she will submit to her husband."

Now, as I was saying, Peter shows what are the roots of a woman's submission to her husband, the things that make it strong and beautiful. He shows three roots.

First, the deepest root of

"I am thy God. I have loved thee." Always the object of our study must be the greatness and the majesty of our God. "I will strengthen thee, I will uphold thee."

The child of God who knows God the best will also possess the best of all comforts. Our comfort will be rooted in God Himself.

God says, "I will strengthen thee; I will help thee." That means also that the strength of God is granted to us only in the

way of working in us humility. Every saint of God must learn this. The strongest Christian is one who knows God in His truth, in His sovereignty, and in His power, and who knows himself in his weakness, sinfulness, and total inability. God brings that out in verse 14 of Isaiah 41 when He refers to Jacob as a worm: "Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel." A worm! When God shines upon you, He gives you to know that, of yourself, you are nothing. He will empty you of your own strength. He will bring you down low. He will expose to you your pride and your weakness, and then He will fill you with the fullness of Himself. That is always the way it is. First we must know that vain is the help of man. First we must

know our own unworthiness, our weakness, our inability, our damnworthiness as sinners before God. Then God says, "I will strengthen thee." Look unto God.

He goes on to say, "Yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." The right hand in Scripture

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is, of course, the symbol of authority and power. But it is also the idea of dexterity, of that which is coordinated, that

which is skillful. The right hand of God's righteousness refers to the fact that God will exercise all of His power in a skillful and in a faithful manner toward us. God will uphold us skillfully and wisely. Sometimes we say to the Lord, "But the way is wrong, the load is too heavy. It is not right, Lord. It's too much—the demands upon me, what is going on in my family. I'm going crazy. The obstacles to my marriage, the future of the church, my personal struggles—it's all wrong," we say. God says, "I will uphold thee by my right hand of righteousness, by my skillful, faithful, omnipotent hand. Even though all hell should endeavor to take you, even though the devil would try to pluck you from My hand, he will not. I will uphold you skillfully, wisely, according to My own commitment

for an example of that. There is no place where God is not. God is constantly upholding all and every thing, from the most distant part of the universe to the tiniest speck on the earth. All things are in His hands.

But when God says, “I am with thee,” He means that He is present with His people in His love. He is present with us in Christ. He is present in His grace and favor. Note the words, “I am with thee.” What name of God is that? What is the name that means “God is with us”? Immanuel. Immanuel means “God with us.” So when God says “I am with thee,” we must see the promise of Christ. We must see the Son of God walking in our human nature, dying for us upon the cross solely of grace, uniting us to Him as His body. “I am with thee, thy Savior, thy God.”

But that God is with us means also that He controls all things by His providence for our good, that God is working by a mighty power in and through all things to accomplish a perfect and a holy end for each one of His children. Think of that. The child of God, belonging to God by grace, is not simply meandering through life. It is not just another day. It is not just the same-ol’, same-ol’. But God is working in a perfectly wise way as the glorious God—a perfect counsel and plan of salvation—

all directed for our good. “I am with you in My favor in Christ. I am with you by a perfect, wise control, directing all things as your glorious God.” Why must we not be afraid? Why must we not be dismayed? “I am with thee—thy Savior, thy loving Father, to direct all things for thy good.”

But there is another reason. We could say that the reason is yet deeper and more profound. It is the reason found in who God is. All of His perfections work in the behalf of His people. That is an awesome thought. In all that God is, He is for us. If God (read Romans 8) be for us, who can be against us? All the virtues and powers of God are focused on and funneled to the glory of His children. It is very important, then, for you as a child of God to study your God. The philosopher says, “Know thyself.” Man says that he must make the object of his study man. And more and more in the church, men make man himself their focus. Now, there is certainly a need for that. The Word of God will certainly tell us what man is and will certainly unfold to us our problems in every sphere of our life. But the focus must be upon God. We must know God! We were created to know God. We must delve into the being of God. We must put aside all other interests. We must be consumed by the amazing truth of our God.

womanhood is hope in God. In verse 5 of I Peter 3 we read, “The holy women also, who trusted (or better, who hoped) in God, adorned themselves.” They hoped in God. That is where Scripture begins. What is the deepest root of God’s grace in a believing girl? It is hope in God. In the words of Psalm 62: Truly my soul waiteth upon God; my expectation is from Him; He only is my rock and my refuge. A Christian woman does not place her hope in her husband as the source of her ultimate good and peace. She does not place her hope in this life. She does not place her hope in getting a husband. She does not place her hope in her looks. She does not say concerning her looks, “This is going to keep me. This will provide security and acceptance.” But she places her hope in the promises of God. She lays hold on them. That is the root of being a Christian woman: hope in God.

We read in Proverbs 31:25: “Strength and honour are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come.” Better translated, “She shall laugh at times to come.” She laughs at everything the future will bring and might bring, because she hopes in God. The source of womanhood, first of all, in Christ, is hope in God. With hope in God the Christian woman looks away from the troubles, miseries, and obstacles of this life that seem to make the

future so bleak. And she focuses her attention on the sovereign power and love of her God, who rules in heaven and earth as He pleases. The Christian woman, therefore, knows her Bible. She knows her theology. She knows the sovereignty of God. She knows His promise that He will be with her and help her no matter what. This is the deep root of womanhood.

It is not the deep root of *every* woman, but only of a *believing* woman. Not just a *married* woman, but all *holy* women. Hope will drive away fear—hope in God! That first.

Secondly, Peter says the root of womanhood is holiness. He says, “...holy women also, who hoped in God.” The root of being a Christian woman is holiness, the holiness that Jesus Christ bestows. We have bad ideas sometimes about holiness. Holiness is not something of ourselves. It is of the grace of God. It is the presence of the Holy Spirit of Christ in our hearts creating new, God-pleasing desires. In Christ, holiness is not drudgery, a dull thing. Nor is it a proud thing whereby we say, “I’m holier than you.” But it is the consecration of all my being and the dedication of all that I am to the service of God. It is the realization of the purpose of my life. Peter said in I Peter 2:9, “But ye are a...holy nation...that ye should shew forth the praise

of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.” Holiness means that we are set aside for God’s praise. Holiness in a Christian woman means that she understands that she is not set aside to be eyed in the lust of men. Girls, you need to be very careful what pictures you put on Facebook. Every boy knows what pictures you have and knows exactly what you are showing. Your body (no, not yours, Christ’s body—it is Christ’s possession!) is to be to the praise and to the honor of God’s grace. The root of a Christian woman is the steadfast desire, it is the sincere commitment, to be pure, chaste, and devoted to God. A Christian young man will be attracted to you by what you do not show him.

And, thirdly, the root of a Christian woman is to be focused on the internal adornment of grace. The apostle Peter says, “This is how women in the Old Testament times adorned themselves.” Here he is referring back to verses 3 and 4 of I Peter 3, where he said that the adornment must not be outward, but of the hidden man of the heart. The Christian woman, then, does not focus on the external. Not because the Bible is against beauty and attractiveness. You must not read the Scriptures and say that the Christian woman must dress in a gunnysack. But the idea is this, that the Christian woman does not focus, does not

place her efforts, on the outside but focuses on the beauty that is within. She is concerned about the internal beauty.

Christian men are also addressed here in what they expect. What are we saying to women in the church, to our wives, to our daughters, that we want them to be? In the world it is very plain what the world wants them to be. It is expressed in the fashion models—skinnier and skinnier. It is shown on the magazine covers and on the TV and on the billboards. They have to have the perfect figure, the tight clothes, the cleavage, the naked-look dress, the seductive look. Beauty to the world is brazen, manipulative, and assertive. God says, “Come into My divine school of cosmetology.” This is not dull! Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel—all of these were beautiful women. Beauty is a gift of God. But God says that you must be concerned about an inward beauty that mirrors the grace of Jesus Christ.

Now it is out of these—hope in God, holiness, and a focus on inward beauty—out of these grows the godly submission of a wife to her husband. Do not try first to be submissive. Ask God to grow these roots in your heart: hope in God, holiness, and a focus on inward beauty. Out of those things in your heart, live with your husband in submission.

simply say, “Now forget your feelings. It does not matter what you see.” But God says, “Look to Me.” That is the answer: Look to that which is greater than anything, and all things, that could ever oppose you. “Look to Me. Learn to know Me. Learn to place your trust in who I am.”

The command is repeated: “Be not dismayed; for I am thy God.” The word “dismayed” is a little different than fear. It means to be discouraged at the prospect of trouble, to be alarmed. The word refers to those who are nervous, on edge, their eyes darting around and the slightest noise making them jump. They become nervous and they greet every bit of news with alarm. Judah was tempted to be like that. They saw all that was happening among the nations and they became jumpy; they were on edge; they became discouraged.

So our minds, too. We can easily begin to magnify the obstacles. We are like little children—we exaggerate our trials and our difficulties, and the power of God shrinks in our hearts and minds. That is something very odd about our human nature, our sinful nature. It shows itself in that in the midst of difficulties we can talk up and we can magnify everything that is against us, and we imagine how great it is and how impossible it must be

and how hopeless it is, and at the same time we minimize God. We say, O yes, we know God is faithful. Yes, we know that we have that glorious salvation in Christ. But, but.... Then we magnify the obstacles as if those things that are against us are greater than our God. Once again, faith sees God as great. And then, no matter the obstacles, faith sees them in their true dimension.

The command, then, is “Be not dismayed; for I am thy God.” The idea is that of the covenant: God’s eternal commitment to His people in the blood of Jesus Christ. “I have established, by My grace, a bond of love and fellowship with you, a relationship with you in My Son. I am thy God.” That is entirely of grace. “I have become thy God.” You see, salvation is exclusively of God. It is from God to us. “I am thy God. All that I am is thine. Therefore, be not dismayed nor fear.”

If we are then to have this precious promise in our heart, we must understand the reasons why we must not fear or be dismayed. First of all, it is because of our God and because of the fact that He is omnipresent. He says, “For I *am* with thee.” What does that mean? It means more than just the truth that God is present everywhere and always. He is. The Scriptures teach us that He is in every part of His creation. Read Psalm 139

home. They had no protection. They had no military. They were in a strange country. In fact, the prophet says to them in the opening verses, that they were accounted as dust in the eyes of the nations. Then the mighty Medes and Persians, that kingdom under Cyrus, was looming on the horizon about to destroy Babylon. And the question was: What is going to happen to us?

So also we can look out. We see great evils coming. We say, What's going to happen to our child? Am I going to be able to bear this burden much longer? What about our marriage and the difficulties and the weariness that we experience in dealing with them? What about my health, cancer, death? And then those personal and inward fears that beset us?

But God says, look to Him. Fear thou not; for *I* am with thee. In the chapter, when He commands "Fear not," He always gives reason why we should not fear. If you read the chapter yourself you will see that the eye of faith has very much to look at. Do not fear, says God. But believe. Look by faith to Me. He says to us in verse 9, "I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away."

There God is calling us to look by faith to the decree of gracious election, the truth that from eternity God has determined to love His children in Christ, to pick out and to choose His own redeemed in Christ in order that He might bring them to glory. And He says, Not only look at My eternal election; but look at My covenant (v. 8). You are the seed of Abraham, my friend. I am with thee. That means that God says to us, "I have established a bond of fellowship and love with you in the blood of My Son. In that bond you have become My servants and My friends. You are My peculiar people. And in this covenant, I will remain ever married and bound to you. Look to that."

Then the Lord God says, "Look at Me! Look at My omnipotence and My omnipresence, that is, My all-power and My everywhere-presence. I am with thee." Now faith looks at these things. Faith does not simply stare itself blind at all the impossibilities that come up against us. But faith looks to God, looks to the God of our salvation. And in God we are strengthened.

That is very important. God comes to us and He does not

*Faith does not
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Peter brings it all together with an example. The Scriptures often say to us that an example is worth a thousand words. The example here is Sarah. Peter says, "Even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement."

Who was Sarah? Sarah was the wife of Abraham and one of the most fascinating women in all of the Bible. She had many facets. She was a woman of faith. She is mentioned in Hebrews 11:11: "Through faith also Sarah herself received strength to conceive seed."

The Bible, of course, does not overlook the faults of Sarah. Sarah could be very pushy. In Genesis 16, when the promise of a son to Abraham was not being fulfilled, and she was now 78 years old and had been in the land of Canaan for thirteen years, she said to Abraham, "Go in unto Hagar my handmaid and have a child with her." And Abraham obeyed her. There you have a role-reversal. He hearkened to her. She was pushing him the wrong way. At other times, Sarah did not stand up when she should have stood up—when Abraham said to Sarah, "Tell Pharaoh you are my sister, because I'm afraid he's going to kill me if he discovers that you are my wife." She should have

said, "Abraham, how could you suggest such a thing!"

But the Bible focuses on Sarah's virtues, on her faith, on what God did in her. She was not perfect. When God summed her life, and uses her as an example, He does not focus on her faults. He focuses on what He did in her. God is more gracious than we are. We should learn from that.

Peter says that Sarah is an example of two things—two things that God worked in her as an example to Christian wives. First of all, in what she did. Sarah obeyed Abraham. She listened to him and she responded favorably. She showed her submission in following Abraham, by giving up what was most dear to her as a woman. God had said to Abraham, "Go to a land that I will show thee." Abraham was seventy-five years old. Sarah was sixty-five. Abraham had only the word and the promise of God. Sarah had to leave a place, the place of her family, the place of her security. She had to set her husband's God-given calling and duty above herself. She is no different from any other woman. She would have asked Abraham, "Where are we going? Do you know where? Are we coming back?" And all he could respond was, "Sarah, I don't know. You have to come with me."

And then, do not forget

Genesis 22, when God said to Abraham, “Take thy son, thy only son, Isaac, whom thou lovest, and offer him up to me where I will show thee.” Do you think that Abraham kept that secret from Sarah? I do not believe that. I believe that he told her: “Sarah, God calls us to give up this child, to give this child over. And, Sarah, you can’t go with me. You can’t protect him. God will work this out.” I think it was a very teary farewell that day. And while we think of Abraham on the three-day journey to Mount Moriah knowing that he must offer up his own son, what do you think was on Sarah’s heart as she was left home alone, as she thought of her son Isaac, the miracle child, whom she had nursed and whom she loved? I think that the last words that Abraham and Sarah spoke on the day that Abraham left with Isaac to offer him up are the words that are recorded in Hebrews 11:19. I believe that Sarah spoke these words with Abraham: “God is able to raise him up from the dead.” Sarah hoped in God. Sarah knew God’s care of her and committed her child into that care.

Secondly, Sarah is an example because of what she called her husband. Peter says she called him “lord.” What does that mean? It means this: what you call someone reflects what you think of your relationship to that person. It

is indeed interesting that there is one time recorded in the Bible that Sarah called Abraham “lord.” It is found in Genesis 18:12. Three angels have appeared to Abraham. God has spoken His promise: “Sarah shall have a son.” You recall that Sarah, inside the tent, was eavesdropping. And when she heard that, she laughed, for she was far past the age of bearing children. She had never been able to bear a child. And the Spirit of God tells us what she said in herself at that moment: “After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?” Now, what you say about someone behind his back is the clearest indication of what you think about him. To their face you say, “Yes, sir, officer. Yes, Dad.” But then, when you are by yourself, you express what you really think about that person. Here is Sarah. She is expressing her unbelief in God’s promise, her cynicism with God, and if ever she is going to speak in a degrading way of her husband it would be now. “I’m going to have a child with that old man?”

What would you call your husband? What do you call your husband when you are most frustrated and exasperated? Sarah, at that moment, called him “lord.” Sarah embraced in her deepest soul her relationship to Abraham given by God in marriage. She had one thing straight. “This is my God-given

began.” God is true. God is faithful. God is righteous. Shall the eternal, faithful, righteous, true God abandon His own promise? Shall He forget? Shall His love cease? The answer is, No! A thousand times, a million times, No!

This promise is sure because it stands upon the blood of Christ. And it stands upon the being of God.

The promise is found in a very significant chapter in the prophecy of Isaiah. The prophet Isaiah is bringing warm words of assurance to Judah as they are in the captivity of Babylon. They are prophetic words, words that see ahead to that situation. In that situation, the people of Judah would see Cyrus king of Persia coming upon the kingdom of Babylon with a power even greater than that of Babylon. Many of the other nations would respond to Cyrus by taking counsel together, thinking that their strength would be in their numbers and in confederation against Cyrus. Then they would turn to their idols. But the Lord God commands His people to do otherwise. He says to them in verses 8 and 9, “But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend. Thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the chief men thereof, and said unto thee, Thou art

my servant; I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away.” God’s counsel to Judah was to trust in Him. That is God’s word to us as well—a word that is fitted for our personal situation and for our need. The Word of God brings to us a prevailing promise. And that prevailing promise is this: Fear not; I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God.

Note that it is, first of all, a command. We read, “Fear thou not.” Fear is when we see looming on the horizon a great evil, which we believe is going to be dreadful and will utterly destroy everything in which we hope. Fear is when there stands on our pathway an obstacle that we estimate surely will take everything away from our hearts and prevent the good thing that God has promised to us in Christ. We estimate things, and to our eyes, as far as we can see, the good hope that God has given to us will fail us. Fear is when we walk by sight, not by faith. Then we find much reason to fear. We become scared. Anxieties come and overwhelm us and drive us to a panic.

God was speaking to Judah who would be in the captivity of Babylon. It is very hard to put ourselves in that situation. But they certainly would have great reason to fear and to be overwhelmed with anxiety. Their strength was God. They had no

THE REFORMED WITNESS HOUR

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*Prevailing Promise
Rev. Carl Haak*

Dear Radio Friends,

Today we consider a beautiful passage of the Word of God as recorded in Isaiah 41:10. There we read, “Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.”

I would call that verse God’s prevailing promise, that is, that it is a promise that goes over, and through, all the struggles of our hearts. It has the victory over all that apparently contradicts the hope that we have in Christ.

What is in your way today? What causes you fear? What is it that you see that mounts up and says that the hope that is yours in Christ is impossible?

What is really in our way and causing us fear is always unbelief, the weakness of our own faith. The promise that we just read in Isaiah 41:10 goes over, pushes aside, prevails. “Fear thou not; for I am with thee...I am thy God...I will strengthen thee.”

This promise prevails because it stands upon something. The promises of God, of course,

stand upon a foundation. This promise stands, first of all, along with all of the promises of God, upon the foundation of the blood of Christ. In II Corinthians 1:20, 21, we read that all the promises of God are Yea and Amen in Christ. We ask the question, then: Will God forsake me? Will the promise that He gives to me be found faithless? Will He lead me in such a way that destroys my hope? Will He ever abandon one of His own? Well, the blood of Jesus Christ says, No, that cannot be. The blood of Calvary seals the promises of God. Through the cross, God says, “As I have given Christ to experience the death and hell of My children, so I will not forsake them but save them to the end.”

Secondly, this promise stands upon the being of God. If you have your Bible handy, open to Isaiah 41:10 and you will see that four times in that verse God says, “I.” God’s promises, therefore, rest upon His own character and being. We read in II Timothy 2:13 that He cannot deny Himself. We read in Titus 1:2, “In hope of eternal life, which God, *that cannot lie*, promised before the world

husband. This is my head, my leader, my provider, my protector, my lord.” Out of the heart, says the Bible, one speaks. Have you embraced this Word of God that the man to whom God has given you, the man to whom you are married, is your head, husband, leader, protector, lord? And do you, for Christ’s sake, serve him as the church serves Christ?

Peter says to the Christian woman, “You don’t need to be afraid when you do this. You are daughters of Sarah, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.” Submission must not be rooted in fear. Submission is free. It is our liberty in Christ to give up ourselves for another. This is freedom. You are the daughters of Sarah. The faith that God placed in Sarah is the faith that God places in you. This woman Sarah, who wore sandals and lived in a tent, is speaking. God is speaking through her. A woman who had everything against her hope, who could not see with the human eye God’s promises, she believed in God. And her example gives birth.

Let us be encouraged. Yours is not just a marriage. You are a daughter of Sarah. Your life of godly submission, your life as

a wife, glorifies God. Perhaps you are not being written about in *Good Housekeeping*, or in the *Ladies’ Home Journal*. But you preach a lasting sermon. Your life bears a testimony throughout all ages of God and of His Son Jesus Christ. You need not fear. You need not fear that submission will make you vulnerable. Hope in God. Seek to do the will of God. Do not fear. Do not fear losing your attractiveness, your beauty. Do not fear what will happen to your children, your house, or your wealth. Make God your hope and your refuge. Follow His will. Seek the beauty that is in Jesus Christ. Sink the roots of your faith into Him. And the believing generation, the believing church, the believing husband, and the believing children will, by God’s grace, say of you: “She is beautiful in the beauty of Christ.”

Let us pray.

Father, we again thank Thee for Thy Word and pray for its blessing upon our hearts. We pray that we may not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by Thy Word, that in our marriages especially we may reflect Christ and the church. We pray in His name alone, Amen.

THE REFORMED WITNESS HOUR

*August 11, 2013
No. 3684*

*The Better Life to Come
Rev. Carl Haak*

Dear Radio Friends,

In the past weeks our program has aired timely messages on the truth of marriage. The messages were solidly based upon Holy Scripture and were applied practically to the real issues in married life.

One aspect that we tend to forget when thinking of marriage is heaven. I mean that our present life in marriage and in our family is preparation for heaven. That is true, of course, of all of our present life as Christians. Our present life as Christians is preparatory for the real life, the better life that is ahead.

This is especially true of our life as we live it in our homes and families. Marriage and family life has a God-given purpose, a purpose that is not simply the preparation for us to live this earthly life to the glory of God. Above and beyond that worthy purpose is a higher purpose. Marriage and family is the time that is spent, by God's grace, in preparation for heaven.

We may say that the home and our Christian marriages are like a ship sailing now on an ocean of this present life with

its storms and calm water, its sun and dark periods, but with its bow pointed toward home. We are homeward bound. The bow, so to speak, or the focus of our life, must be pointed toward the safe harbor that is on the other side, of which our Lord has assured us. That other side is eternal life, the reward that is earned for us through our Master, Jesus Christ.

Is this how you are living in your marriage? What is the direction of your home? Where are you going?

As Christians we make a confession. We confess that we believe in the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting; that is, we believe that this present life is not the end, but in death our souls are brought to be with Christ, the Head of the church. And, further, we believe that in the end of the world, when Jesus returns once more according to Scripture, He will then raise our bodies from the grave and we shall live with Him forever in the new heavens and the new earth. That is our home. That is the better life that is ahead. That is what we

from her, Mom?" Then you will say, "Because, by God's love, I have joy in my heart and hope. I'm going home! The way may be hard. The way may be apparently impossible. There may be many fears and attacks on the way. And the cherished hopes of this life may disappear. But I'm going home. I'm not distressed. I'm not in despair. I'm not forsaken. And I'm not destroyed. For I have a perfect hope in Jesus Christ." That is how you raise your children.

Then we will labor and we will long for that day. There are many who will say to us that this hope of eternal life makes the child of God careless in terms of this present life. In the church they will even write a book to catch attention and say, "Heaven is not my home," supposedly trying to get at this: If you preach and teach that the hope of the Christian is life eternal—to be with Christ—then you will not be of any value or worth to society now. Supposedly that is the idea. Well, I will not enter into that right now to show that that is utterly false. But this is what I will say. The life of those who hope for life to come in Christ and who live with that hope of glory, who live not for this life but who live for the life to come—that life is going to

prove that they are wrong. You will be the hardest worker in the class. You will be the most responsible person. You will not be lazy. You will help others. You will be the first person on the block to lend a hand and to help out. Why? Because we know that our labor is never in vain in the Lord. We know that our life shall not disappear. Living in the hope of Christ, we shall live now to the glory of God. And we will live with a longing. I want to go home. I am eager for Christ to come back. The apostle Paul says, "For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven." You want to be there, do you not? Do you not want to be home in your true home, with the Father's love and with the elder Brother, Jesus Christ?

Then, husbands and wives and families, let us be resolved that we do one thing in this present life and that we do it well. Let us be resolved that we will direct our steps toward home.

Let us pray.

Father, we thank Thee for Thy Word. And we pray that it may enter into our hearts. Wash away and pardon us of all of our sins. In Jesus' name, Amen.

to be home at the supper table with your wife and kids. Give me those hours, because you're making double time. Hand over to me," says the devil, "hard and fast convictions on the truth." The devil says, "Let me be your financial budget manager. And let's arrange that budget around some of the things that you would really like. Give me just a little bit of your spiritual capital. You don't need to sell it all to me. In fact, you may have 90-95% of it. And enjoy it. By all means enjoy it! Go to church, too, if you want. Just sell me a little spiritual capital and I'll give you the world."

Do you want to know what you are going to get if you go into his economy? You are going to get many cares, many worries. You are going to have children who grow up who are distant from you and do not know you because you have not been there. You are going to have a marriage broken up. And you are going to see children who have not learned the one crucial lesson of being a Christian. That crucial lesson is: Sacrifice. And we will end up like Lot—fleeing Sodom alone.

Rear your children for the important things, the things of life eternal. Rear your children,

with your wife, in the Word of God. Rear your children in the church of God where the truth is proclaimed. Rear your children homeward bound.

Then you will have joy and hope. You will have the assurance in your heart that you shall ever live before God's face. Your future is bright. It might not always be that, in the earthly sense, we are bubbly. But deep down, in our hearts, we will have the joy of Jesus Christ. Joy is the whisper of Jesus Christ saying to me, "You are mine." In college, as a young person, you will

*Joy is the whisper
of Jesus Christ
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||| speak of the joy and the hope that is yours in Jesus Christ. You will speak against the tide of the politically correct speech. And you will say, "I'm not afraid of tomorrow. I have a faithful Savior who will hold my soul." And others will look at you and note your testimony.

You will live with joy as a mother before your children. And then your children will come in and will ask you, "Mom, the lady next door had some very bad things happen to her and she is screaming and crying and there's something so hopeless in her cries. Mom, we've seen you cry, too. But your tears are different. Your tears are soft. Why are you different

confess: we believe the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting.

Have you ever asked yourself what that confession of faith had to do with your marriage and with your family life? You say to me, "Well, those two really have little to do with each other, right?" The hope of eternal glory, and present earthly marriage and family life—how often do you think about that in your family and in your marriage? How often do you connect your present marriage and family life with the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting?

The Bible, however, tells us that they have very much to do with each other. And just a little thought will convince you of it. Parenting is the instrument of God for the preparation of souls for eternity.

First of all, remember that God has created the family to prepare us for eternity. We tend to forget that. You look at your children today and you think, "I must prepare them for this life. They need to learn how to hold a job, to assume responsibility. We need to plan, as husband and wife, for their education, even their college education. We need to concern ourselves with their health, their earthly health. We need at the end to leave them at least a little something, don't we?"

But God, to all of that, says,

"You aim far too low. You miss the heart of it. You must prepare your children to die well, to live now for eternity." It is the life of Christ that must be your concern. It is the true future of your children that must be your burden in this present life. In your home you must direct them ahead to the better life that is to come. In our hedonistic and materialistic culture, that is a great task. Are you, as husband and wife, living with your children today with an eternal perspective? That is the question we must have before us.

More practically and more pointedly, do your children see eternity in your eyes? They do look into your eyes, you know. They watch you as you look out at this present life. And as you look out at this present life, something shines from your eyes. What is it? What do they see in your eyes? What do they observe in how you spend money? What do they observe to be the goal and direction, the hope, of your life? What are you living for? What is in your eyes? What are you pressing after?

Still more. The Bible tells us that as parents we bring forth our children for eternity, and that we do this especially as mothers. Even the world sees that God has made parents, and especially mothers, as the ones who set the goal of life for their children. The Bible tells us this

repeatedly. For instance, in the life of Moses, the inextinguishable flame of eternal life and the resolve that he was going to live his life as a pilgrim on this earth was kindled within his soul, by God's grace, through the instrumentality of his mother, Jochabed, when he was in his first years—one, two, three, maybe four years that she had him with her in that mud-brick, thatch-roofed hut as a slave in Egypt. During that time, God, through his mother, embedded in his heart an eternal perspective, so that we read in Hebrews 11:23-26 that at the age of forty Moses said to his stepfather, Pharaoh the king of Egypt, "I'm homeward bound. I'm going to take up my place with a bunch of slaves, with a people who are despised." He said to his stepfather, "I'm going to leave your palace and your throne for the affliction and for the reproach that come to the children of God in this present life. I'm going to do that, Pharaoh, because my hope is set on the hope of glory in Jesus Christ. I believe that there are far greater riches than anything that Egypt could provide for me. Pharaoh, I'm going to live my life for eternity."

The Bible tells us that Pharaoh responded in wrath. Moses feared not the wrath of the king. There was the wrath of Pharaoh. We envision it: "What! What's gotten into you, man? After all that I've worked for, and after

all that I've saved up for your life. The power, the throne, the wealth of Egypt—you can have it all. What's the matter with you? What gets into your head?" In terms of this life, Moses was accounted a failure and a fool in the eyes of this world. But he was no fool. Moses, out of love for God, laid hold upon the truth of eternal life. He lived his life for it. And this was kindled in him through a mother. Through a mother, God directed Moses' eyes to the true and the eternal riches.

Now do you see the connection between life eternal and your family life and your marriage? When we confess as Christians "I believe the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting," we are not talking about something that is valuable only to an aged saint who is at death's door. It certainly is valuable to us then, is it not? But this confession of our faith speaks practically to our present situation in our homes and families. It speaks to all of us. It speaks to you who are middle-aged and to you who are burdened down with all the cares of this present life and your family, marriage, and in your job. You must say, in the midst of all of it, I know, I believe, I confess that I have a home in glory and I am going there! Therefore, we do not faint. The Bible says in II Corinthians 4:16, "For which cause (that is, for the cause of

really is value? What really will give you joy? To be able to purchase the latest CD? To have the latest clothes? To be able to spend what you want when you want? Is living this: that you get a job so that you have enough money to throw around and have a good time? Is the amount of money in your wallet what makes you a man? Is that how you live? What about those jobs that have at their heart the preparation of children for the kingdom of God, for being a husband and a wife in a Christian home? Do you set your hearts upon that? That is where it is really at. That is the heart and the focus of where the grace of God is performing wonders in the preparation of souls for eternity. Do you want to be involved in that work? What about Christian schools and being a teacher there, or the work of the church? Is your heart set upon heaven? Or is your heart taken up with the consumer culture? Have you swallowed the lie that things and earthly pleasures are what life is worth living for? Do you know the true wealth that is in Christ?

What about dating? How do you evaluate a young man? He's willing to spend money on you? He takes you out to a nice restaurant? Well, it might be enjoyable to go out to a nice restaurant if he can afford it sometimes. But as you sit there,

and as you watch him, how do you evaluate him? What he's willing to buy you? Or do you ask the question: What treasure does this young man have in his heart? Does he have a treasure? Does he have the treasure of Jesus Christ?

This also affects us in how we are going to rear our children. We must understand that as parents it is not the things that we give them, and it is not necessary that the things we give them be new. The most important thing is not that we have a home filled with plenty of bedrooms, so that every person in the family has his own bedroom and can close the door and stay in there, and that in it is everything one could possibly want. That is not the goal. The goal is the truth of God. Do not sell that. Fathers, do not buy into the world's economy. Do not sell spiritual assets. Do not make this world your goal.

Probably most of you fathers work in some type of industry and you know what a smooth sale is in earthly things. Well, there is no one so smooth and oily as the devil. He says to you as a father, "Give me just a small amount of your spiritual capital and I will give you the world. Give me just a few hours of work on Sunday, just a few—just once a month. Give me those hours at supper time, the overtime hours, so that you're not going

Christ, to be in heaven with all the angels and all the saints of God. Jesus will be there. And then, one day, our bodies, even when they grow old and die and are put into the ground, are going to be raised by the power of God and we shall leap and dance in the new heavens with joy in our hearts. You tell them those simple things. And you know what? The hand of your little child is full. You do not present options concerning these things. You do not guess. You tell them the truth. You tell them, Now we're going to live as pilgrims with our eye and our face toward heaven. And then you show them how to live as a pilgrim as you face earthly setbacks and you deal with your hard times.

Not only will we then live in confidence and assurance, but we will also know how to view earthly things and how to behave toward earthly things. With the hope of life eternal in our hearts, as families and in marriages, we will understand the vanishing reality of this present world, and the corruptible and non-satisfying reality of the things of this present time. The apostle Paul gives us very good instruction in I Corinthians 7:29-31. He says to us that the time is short, and that it remaineth that those who have wives be as though they had none; those who weep, as though they wept not; those

who rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; those who buy, as though they possessed not; and those who use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passes away.

We need to know that word today. We need to understand what that means. It means that marriages, heartaches, and possessions are all transient. You need to know that, if you are to live in marriage and live with your possessions in a proper way today. We need to hear that Word of God today, especially concerning the earthly things that so worm their way into our hearts. That is the sin of greed and covetousness that is as spiritual cancer aimed at the destruction of the hope of life eternal in our breast. We are living in a consumer culture. Advertising bombards us relentlessly. We are told that things will give pleasure and that we must have those things right now. Future cost must yield to present personal gratification. We are in a time of consumer debt and credit cards and no final accounting and payments deferred. How does this affect us spiritually? How are we raising our children?

The Son of God said, "Take heed. A man's life does not consist in the abundance of the things that he possesses but in being rich toward God." Young people, what really is life? What

the hope of eternal life) we faint not" in this present life. We have direction. We have hope.

But this is also true for you as young people. This is the only true direction. Without this direction you wander in the maze of the world, which ends in eternal ruin and hell. But this is the sure guidance. Young people, keep your eye upon that which will not fail. Keep your eye upon eternity, the hope set before you.

This hope of life eternal is not, then, just something to remember at the moment of death. But it is something that you need to remember as a young person today lest you plunge yourself into this life and say, "This is all that there is. Live it up. Let's party!" And you end up wasted and hopeless.

We live our life now in the family for the better life ahead, for we believe in the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting.

That confession of our faith tells us that this present life is not the end and it is not the end-all. Did you understand? We do not believe that this life is the end, that when we die, that is the end. We have a life that is to come, which is far better, says the apostle. But we also, therefore, believe that this present life is not the end-all. This present life is preparation. It is but a brief time of preparation

for the eternal, for the better, for the full, and for the glorious life that is ahead. That is our Christian faith. II Corinthians 5:1 reads: "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." When I die, says the apostle, it is not the end. It is the beginning of a better life. Now I am in a tent. Then I shall be in a building. The important life is that which is to come.

This shows how poor the life of millions is today. You are poor, according to God's Word, if this life is all that you have and you pin your hopes on this life. This life is all there is for you? Then you are poor, utterly poor. If that is so, then, of course, it makes sense that the world, apart from Jesus Christ, would be in a frenzy. The world, apart from Jesus Christ, says, "We've got to do it now. We have to have it now. We have to spend it now. Let's eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die." So a mother will say to her daughter, "Your romance had better begin now at the age of 9 and 10 and a boyfriend at 11." And, young people, they offer to you credit cards so you can spend now. You can have it now. Do not worry about debt. You must have it now. They come to us in middle age and they say, "Your life is slipping away. You ought to leave the wife that you

don't want and the family that shackles you, so that you can follow your own dreams. After all, this is all there is. You've got to have it now."

If we get caught up with the "now and have to have it now" idea as children of God, then we are denying our faith. We are denying Christ. This life is not all there is! It is not the end-all. But my life, says the Christian, is in Christ right now. And the fullness of that life is waiting for me in glory. I believe that, says the Christian. Hebrews 11:1, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." I feel in my heart the beginning of eternal life.

Therefore, we are to live our life in our marriage and in our family for the better, for the life that is ahead. We read in Philippians 1:23 and 24, "For I am in a strait betwixt two," says Paul, "having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you." This present life is good for us as Christians. "For me to live is Christ," says the apostle. But the perfection of that life in Christ in glory is better. This present life is necessary. It is valuable. It is preparation time. We do not despise this present life. We do not think little of our present homes and marriages, our families and children. We do

not say concerning those things of God's covenant and of bringing up our children and living with our families in the love of God, "It doesn't matter." It does matter! But at the same time, the life that is ahead, where we will be with Christ, is better.

We read in Ecclesiastes 7:1, "A good name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth." Solomon says that the day of one's death is better than birth! How can that possibly be, we ask. Perhaps you have been present at the birth of your children. You remember the joy of birth. Better is the day of death than birth? If suddenly, in the middle of the night, your four-year old is taken to the hospital and dies? If your husband of forty years does not return to you, and dies—how is that better? Of course, we understand that, apart from Jesus Christ, it is not better. Apart from Jesus Christ, both days are bad days, the day of one's birth and the day of one's death. But the day of one's death is better, for the child of God, than the day of one's birth. How do you explain that?

First of all, that is telling us that life now is attended with the misery of our sin. Birth marks the entrance into all misery, whereas death, for a child of God, marks our entrance into the fullness of eternal life.

a teacher? In the midst of that class you make a good confession. You say, "I know in Christ that my soul at death shall be taken up to Christ my head, and my body shall be raised at the last day and will be made like to His glorious body, and I will live in a new heavens and a new earth where righteousness shall dwell. I know that!" Then, apart from grace, the class ridicules you. They say, "Well, prove that one." How do you respond? How do you know? Or do you just keep quiet?

We know from the Word of God. Faith is not guessing. Faith is reality. Faith is truth. Faith, based upon the Holy Scriptures, is an absolute certainty—a certainty of those things that eye hath not seen nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive, according to Scripture. So we base our faith upon the Scriptures. We go to the Scriptures and we say, "But this does not rest in debate, this does not rest in human argument, this is not decided upon the scale of human reason. The Scriptures have spoken. Christ lives, I know He lives, He lives within me. I am risen already now by His grace. I believe in Him and I shall be raised to be with Him in glory. Because Christ lives, I will live also. And the Holy Spirit testifies of these things in my heart."

This is also the confidence

and the assurance that is so important for parents as they rear their children in the home. We are surrounded by secular unbelief, which tells us that the best thing a parent can do is to do nothing. That is, not to impress upon their child any firm conclusions about morality or Christianity or what happens after death. After all, nobody can be so sure about those things, and if we just have nice feelings about them, then we keep them to ourselves and do not try to impose them upon others. Then we are being the mature parent. Such is the folly of this world. The folly of the world is: The future is not ours to see. Our children are to be sent off into the big unknown. Parents remove firm landmarks, the only true landmarks to guide them, God's Holy Word. No, as parents we must have a certain confidence, a certain assurance that is given to us by faith.

Now, mother, the hand of your little child is small. It takes only little things to fill it up. So you give them little things. You tell them when they are with you, before they even go off to school: God is great; God is good; Jesus is our Savior; we are going to heaven; your soul—you take your finger and you tap it on their little chest and you say, there's a soul in there. That is who you are. At death, that soul will be taken by the good Shepherd, Jesus

that? Psalm 90:12: “So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.” We are in the hand of God moment by moment.

When we know that, when we live daily by a true faith in Jesus Christ as our Savior, and when we trust in His righteousness as our only acceptance with God, then we are ready to die. But if do not live in faith, if we live apart from Christ, if we live foolishly in a deliberate sin, and if we vainly think that we shall be accepted of God on the basis of something we are or do, then we are not ready to die.

The question is this, as a young person, where is your heart today? At the moment of death, where will it be? Is it fixed upon the cross today? And do you believe, by grace, that you are saved, not because you are a good person in yourself, but because God, by grace, has saved you through Jesus Christ? Then, believing that, you will not just have it in your head, but you will live out of that true faith. Day by day you will deal radically with your sin. You will live your life for the spiritual things of God’s kingdom. You will take the Word of God into your heart. You will be homeward bound.

The life that we now live as children of God in our marriages, in our families, as young people, must be a life that is directed toward eternal life.

What does that mean? Well, it means a number of things. First of all, it certainly means, according to Scripture, that we shall live in confidence and assurance. Confidence and assurance will mark the life of children of God because of their faith in the resurrection of the body and life everlasting. Read the Scriptures. Was there any doubt in the mind of the apostle Paul when he wrote, under the inspiration of the Spirit in II Corinthians 4 and 5, that we know that when this earthly house is dissolved we have a building not made with hands, eternal in the heavens? Was there any doubt whatsoever in the apostle Paul? Read those chapters. Remember that the apostle Paul lived in the day of Greek culture—the Greek gods and the philosophy of Plato, with all of its spin upon what life is and what comes after death. The apostle Paul was not in any doubt. He did not join the collective philosophy of his day and say, “Well, I have a contribution to make.” No, he said, “I know, absolutely! The resurrection of the body in Jesus Christ and the life everlasting.”

We shall live, then, with confidence and assurance. Do you have that as a young person in your college class, wherever that class may be in the coming fall, a class perhaps in botany, as you are going to be a nurse, or psychology if you’re going to be

We have that eternal life right now. We are in Christ. And, as we read in Colossians 1:27, Christ in us is the hope of glory. Jesus said, “He that believeth in me, hath (not shall have) eternal life.” Nevertheless we are now in our flesh. And on this side of the grave we have much woe and toil. We have the unrelenting struggle against our sins. That comes to us as parents in a particular way. We bring up our children and we see our own sins. We bring up our children, as Christians, that they might be soldiers of the cross, that they might fight against sin, that they might know the truth and defend that truth. And we go through this present life now in our marriage and family with many burdens and many trials sent by God to prepare us for glory. He places upon us burdens, and the straps of those burdens cut deeply into our shoulders. But the life ahead is not going to have that. Sin is going to be gone. The burden will be lifted. The trial and the purpose of the trial will be over. Our pilgrim’s worn coat and our staff will be replaced with a glorious robe and the scepter of Jesus Christ. Through death we shall have a full communion with God. And we shall be changed, as in a moment, from utter destruction. We shall pass through the door and enter into Father’s house of many mansions in glory.

And we shall see His face.

There is, you know, something in the Bible about that, about seeing God’s face. The psalmist says, “As for me, I shall behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness.” The apostle Paul says, “Now we know in part, but then we shall know face to face.” When we go to heaven, I know whom I will see. At the moment of the Christian’s death, he shall see Jesus face to face. Jesus said to the thief on the cross, “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in Paradise.”

And so we bring up our children, our little boys and girls. We take them, sometimes, to a funeral home. They stand with us before the casket. Do not try to shelter them from that. Take them along. Maybe they see at the cemetery the pile of dirt and the coffin. And they see that their aunt or their grandpa is going to be lowered now, the dead body, into that grave, and covered up with the dirt. They ask you the question, “Where is he?” Do you, as a parent, believe? They look up into your eyes. They see your tears. Do they see the sparkle of hope and joy in Jesus Christ in your tears? You tell them at the grave, but you tell them also at home and you tell them in how you live, you tell them this: It is the life of your soul that is important. You say to them, when they are young girls, “Make your heart

beautiful in Christ.” Then you tell them as a mother, “Beauty is not something that is found in a cosmetic case. It’s not to be found on the rack at Nordstroms. You’re not going to obtain beauty by Valley Fitness. That is not how you find it.” But you tell them about the resurrection of the body. You tell them of Christ’s complete victory over our sin and that when He comes yet once more, He will raise our bodies from the grave and He will make them like unto His glorious body. You tell your little children that one day soon the Spirit of Jesus Christ is going to blow upon cemeteries and blow upon ocean bottoms and blow upon open fields of corn, and dead bones shall live again. Children of God will come forth in glory. And in the new creation of God we will live forever and ever with Jesus Christ.

And so, as a mother, you tell your children about their bodies, even from the time they are little babies. You teach them respect and care and how to keep their bodies and about modesty because you believe that the body and the soul have been purchased by the blood of Jesus Christ and are now His.

You tell your boys and girls their bodies are temples in which God dwells. The body is a creation that was made to praise God. Therefore, there is no room in that body for fornication, for drugs, for the things of sin. You teach your children to live for the life that is ahead, the life that is better.

Are you homeward bound? Are you living for this life? Or, in this life, are you living with the family for the better life that is to come?

Let us pray.

Father in heaven, we thank Thee for Thy Word. We do confess our sin and our weakness before Thee. But we praise Thee for Thy marvelous faithfulness and for the faith that Thou hast given to us in Christ. Now, O Lord, may we not get off the track. May we not set our goals upon the things that vanish in the day when the Lord returns to consume all this world and its sin, but may we live for that which endures, which is to be found at Thy right hand. May the hope of eternal life propel all that is done in our homes and marriages. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

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Homeward Bound
Rev. Carl Haak

Dear Radio Friends,

Is your family homeward bound? Is your marriage on track? Are you and your children living toward a better life?

I am asking the question whether or not in our families and marriages as Christians we are living consciously out of our confession that we believe the resurrection of our body and the life everlasting in Jesus Christ. Do you live with an eternal perspective? Do you understand that this life is preparation for the life that is to come, which is, according to God’s Word, far better? Or do you live simply a carnal, earthly life foolishly, living only for the things now and the present, believing that this present life can satisfy you? Or do you, by grace, fix your hope upon Christ, not in an abstract manner but by living your present life with your eye above, seeking to be faithful to Him and seeking to be prepared with your children for that day when you shall enter into the glorious kingdom of your Lord? Are you, then, homeward-bound travelers to the true and eternal shores of glory? Is your marriage on track? Are you and your children living toward the better life?

If so, then two things will now, by God’s grace, be true of you. First of all, you and your children, and you as young people, will live ready to die. Ready to die means simply living today in Christ, now. That is what it means to be ready to die in the biblical sense. To be ready to die is to live moment by moment in the Lord Jesus Christ, doing His will and walking with Him in faith.

As young people, we have a tendency to think that our future is invincible and that we are indestructible. Sometimes we can be shocked. I can recall that, as a young person, I would be shocked when a friend of my own age died, or was diagnosed with cancer or some other crippling disease. Somehow it always appears to us that that is going to happen to someone else. Someone else is going to be diagnosed with cancer — not I. Someone else is going to have the sudden fatal car accident. That happens only to other people, right? I am invincible. I am immune. It is not going to happen to *me*.

The Bible, of course, corrects us. God asks, How do you know