

Preparing Boys for Marriage and Fatherhood

With Guest: Dr. Ernie Baker

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Host: David Wheaton 0:07

Preparing boys for marriage and fatherhood. That is a topic we'll discuss today on The Christian Worldview Radio program, where the mission is to sharpen the biblical worldview of Christians and to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ. I'm David Wheaton, the host. The Christian Worldview is a nonprofit, listener-supported radio ministry. Our website is TheChristianWorldview.org, and the rest of our contact information will be given throughout today's program. As always, thank you for your notes of encouragement, financial support, and lifting us up in prayer.

This is Father's Day weekend, and perhaps nothing has been more assaulted in our society than God's design for a godly father shepherding his wife and children. God's model is the only one that leads to harmony in marriage in the home and the raising of a next generation who loves and fears God. How has God's design for fathers been undermined and resisted in our society? Well, in many ways. Fatherly authority in the home is slandered as misogynistic and toxic. Culture, peers, the educational system, social media, entertainment endlessly promotes sexual immorality, gender confusion, and quote, self-actualization. In other words, live for self, not for God and others. Even in evangelical churches, including Christian schools and camps, there's a delay of the necessary transition from boyhood to manhood through emphasizing amusement over maturity. It's no wonder boys grow up drifting without God's vision for life, marriage, and fatherhood, lacking work ethic, distracted by video games and entertainment, and thus unprepared and even uninformed about God's design for their lives.

This is part of the reason we held the Overcomer course the past two years, to help young adults understand and pursue God's call on the most important issues of life. Now we aren't holding the two-day course this year due to managing workload, but we wanted to devote a program to the importance of preparing boys for marriage and fatherhood. Helping us do that is our guest, Dr. Ernie Baker. Ernie is the chair of the Master of Arts in Biblical Counseling at the Masters University and the author of several books, including one we will discuss today, *Marry Wisely, Marry Well*. Ernie is also the featured speaker at the upcoming Wisdom Romance and the Single Years Conference on August 21st and 22nd at Anchor Bible Church in Plymouth, Minnesota, which is designed for those in their 20s and late teens. You can preview the conference on our website. Also, in the final segment, we'll hear from my late father back in 2019 when he spoke some words of exhortation to his children and grandchildren. But first, let's get to the interview with Dr. Ernie Baker.

Ernie, thank you for coming on The Christian Worldview Radio program today. This is your first time in the program. Just tell us briefly about your background, how God brought you to saving faith in Christ and what you do now.

Guest: Ernie Baker 3:33

Well, thank you, and I'm very grateful to be with you, David. The Lord saved me when I was 17. I grew up in a Christian home. My dad was a pastor, and I thought I had prayed a prayer and asked Jesus to be my savior

when I was uh young, but I got into my teenage years and rebelled radically, and the Lord was very gracious and did not let that go on real long. At age 17, I really came under conviction of sin and understood the gospel really for the first time. And my older sister was the one that actually led me to the Lord, so I loved her anyway, but I love her dearly just because she was very faithful to share the gospel with me. And then the Lord started writing a story about ministry and led me to go to Bible college and seminary, and I met my life partner there, Rose, and we've been married 46 years and have been in ministry 46 years. We have six children, and five of them are married, and 14 grandchildren now. I love doing life with Rose, and uh we have been very humbled that the Lord's allowed us to travel around the world teaching biblical counseling and how to care for people using the Bible.

I now teach at the Master's University and switched from pastoral ministry to professor ministry. We uh have been doing that a long time. I've been at Master's for 20 years now, and I have the blessing of chairing the Master of Arts and Biblical Counseling degree at Master's, and we have students from all over the world. I love them, love the Bible, and just thankful that I get to train the next generation of biblical counselors.

Host: David Wheaton 5:21

Well, thank you for sharing that with us, Ernie. It's the blessing of the Lord makes rich and he adds no sorrow to it, and uh he's richly blessed your life, both in salvation, sanctification, and also your ministry vocation as well. So thank you for sharing that with us. Your dad was a pastor, and you said obviously you grew up hearing the gospel, being in church, and yet you weren't embracing what certainly your parents were telling you. You said even you were going the wrong way. How did your own father deal with that, deal with you for those years before you got into your teens, or especially your teen years, where you weren't walking in the way that your dad and your mom were telling you to go? How did he handle you at that point?

Guest: Ernie Baker 6:09

My dad was an absentee father in a sense. He was very focused on ministry, and that was his life. I have very few memories actually of my father in my home because he was just gone doing ministry all the time. I just developed into a bitter young man because I saw that my father had time for everybody else, but he didn't have time for his family, did not come to ball games and things like that. I have a brand new little booklet that came out called Help I'm Bitter, and it's my story of how the Lord saved me. My dad and I reconciled. He told me that he would have done things differently if he had them to do over again. And we developed a very loving relationship after I was an adult, and I forgave him and uh we were reconciled, and it just didn't matter to me anymore. I just knew that the Lord wanted me to love him. So my dad, I don't think he knew how to handle me. I was a mess, and I caused him all kinds of turmoil as a pastor. As I look back on it, it's kind of surprising that he even survived ministry because I was such a rebellious teenager. As I got a little older, I realized that some of my expectations for my father were just wrong. I had immature expectations of what my father should be. So I'm thankful for the grace of God, and I'm thankful that my dad and I reconciled and we developed a healthy relationship.

Host: David Wheaton 7:40

It's not unusual where ministry can become so overwhelming and so consuming, where even the most important ministry within our own family gets neglected. So that's a great reminder for me to hear that as well. So thank you for sharing that. But also how God causes all things to work together for good to those

who love God, to those who are called according to his purpose, and that and your father missed out on some of the responsibilities he had, and yet God still used it to bring you to saving faith, and then used it to show your dad and the wrong way he had gone, and there was reconciliation. It's just God is an amazing God to bring that all back together. We're going to talk about today as we Father's Day weekend here, preparing boys for marriage and fatherhood. Let's set a standard first, though.

Describe the qualities of a godly husband and father, and who are some examples we can look to in scripture for that.

Guest: Ernie Baker 8:39

Of course, the standard needs to be a biblical standard, and we want to train the next generation of young men to meet whatever the biblical standard is. And I've been impressed through the years by the book *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* by John Piper and Wayne Grudem. They're the general editors. They define manhood as teaching men to lovingly lead, lovingly provide for, and lovingly protect. So to lead, provide for, and protect. And they draw that from especially the example of our Lord, who's the perfect example of manhood. I also like to use the analogy of shepherding. So the church and the world would be a better place if we could be teaching all men to be shepherds of their families. Our Lord is the perfect example of a shepherd. He lovingly leads, he lovingly provides for, he lovingly protects.

That's the definition I taught my boys and tried to disciple them. And the best example, other than our Lord, is I think of Solomon with Proverbs. And I want to be like Solomon and teaching my son. Now, obviously, Solomon was not perfect, and that also encourages me because that tells me that the Lord uses flawed men. Obviously, Solomon was flawed men, he had women issues. Examples in the Bible of fatherhood, many of them, there's many issues with the way they live their lives. But Solomon is a wonderful example of just pleading with his son to listen to godly wisdom. And that's what I've wanted to do with my boys is pour into them biblical wisdom. So Solomon, I think, is a really good example of the type of attitude that a father should have for investing in the next generation.

Host: David Wheaton 10:28

Dr. Ernie Baker is our guest today, the author of *Marry Wisely, Marry Well*, and then a number of other books as well. We'll get into that also in the course of our conversation today.

I looked online for a definition, Ernie, on the Peter Pan mentality. The Peter Pan mentality, quoting here, describes an adult's reluctance to grow up and embrace adult responsibilities. This concept is derived from the character of Peter Pan, who famously refuses to age and remains in a childlike state. Individuals exhibiting this mentality often struggle with maturity and face challenges in various aspects of life. One more paragraph. Characteristics of the Peter Pan mentality. Number one, avoidance of responsibilities. There's a tendency to evade adult tasks such as maintaining a job, managing finances, or committing to relationships.

Number two, difficulty in relationships. Maintaining healthy relationships can be challenging as they may struggle with emotional expression and commitment. And number three, in the Peter Pan mentality, nostalgia for youth, a strong longing for the simplicity and freedom of childhood can hinder their ability to engage in adult life. So basically, it's not wanting to grow up, it's wanting to be a child and just be carefree and playing in your adult life. Why has that mentality, what's called the Peter Pan mentality, afflicted, and this is just my

own general observation, probably several generations now. I know I know my dad's generation was not afflicted by this, but maybe since the 60s, correct me if I'm wrong, there's been this mentality like, I don't want to grow up, I don't want to go into adulthood, I don't want those responsibilities. We even called today that kids need adulting. Like classes in college are named after that. So why has that afflicted us for many generations here?

Guest: Ernie Baker 12:25

So I've never really studied when this started, but I know that my colleagues in the broader biblical counseling world, we've talked about this issue with young men and the Peter Pan mentality for decades now. We've been very concerned about young men not wanting to grow up. And I think there's all kinds of dynamics that are shaping the issues of young men not wanting to take on responsibility. One of them would be the whole feminist movement and just being afraid to be a man. Is a man allowed to be a man? It's almost like young men are ashamed that there's something wrong with being a man. And then the whole issue of wokism, there's a problem with authority.

So if you teach a more like a complementarian view of manhood, that is really looked down upon in our culture. It's almost like you're supposed to be ashamed that you are a man and that you believe that men are to lovingly lead, lovingly provide for, and lovingly protect. There's a rampant problem with pornography. Pornography is like a shortcut to relationships. And so young people not learning the hard work that it takes to have relationships. So there's just a number of dynamics that I think are playing into the Peter Pan mentality. Parents not disciplining, you know, parents just not having a vision for disciplining.

Host: David Wheaton 13:53

Yeah, I think there are you're right. There are a lot of different dynamics going into it. I actually wrote, I just bullet pointed a few of them out here that the dynamic in our society that militates against boys turning into young men who desire to become godly fathers, just the culture itself. You talked about the gender confusion. We talk about peer influence today. So other homes where there's not this emphasis at all, they're around those peers, and so that influences them. The educational system, as you well know, especially the government educational system, has no interest in training boys to be men, to be good fathers or godly fathers.

Social media, you mentioned pornography, that's a huge one, but also social media is a huge point of influence, the entertainment industry, video games, and then of course the scourge of fatherlessness in our country, all the divorce, the out-of-wedlock births, boys grew up without even fathers in the home. Of those things I mentioned, Ernie, there, whether it's the culture and peers and educational system, social media, entertainment, fatherlessness, it seems like the deck, so to speak, is so stacked against a boy growing up in our society today. Do you think this in large part explains why we are, where we are as a society today in America?

Guest: Ernie Baker 15:15

Yes, absolutely. And if I had to pick a key one from that list, I would say fatherlessness, even when there's a father in the home, there are many fathers who don't want to be fathers to the next generation and they just don't have a vision for passing the baton to the next generation. I get really concerned about that in the

church and just with men in general, not having a big enough vision of fatherhood so that the young men then have a big vision of fatherhood. So I'm really concerned about fatherlessness, even if there's a father in the home, but he's not really being a dad.

Host: David Wheaton 15:54

Let's drill down now from the broader culture into the evangelical, let's say, world within the home and the church and the educational system. Those are three primary points of influence for a young boy growing up, let's say, in a Christian environment. Their home, of course, their church, and where they're being educated. Let's say it's in a Christian school. I'd like you to talk about each one of those home, church, school, from a Christian standpoint, where you see the modern evangelical culture or community not nurturing young men or boys toward marriage and being godly fathers. How does that take place in the context of the home, the church, and Christian schools?

Guest: Ernie Baker 16:39

Just so our listeners get the bigger picture and what we think the problem is, is young men don't know what their career is going to be. They're spending a significant amount of time playing video games. All three of those that you mentioned don't seem to grasp how big the issue is. I've had young women say to me, and some of them have read my book, *Marry Wisely, Marry Well*, and one of my lines in the book is run hard after Christ and then look around and see who's running with you. That's the type of person you want to marry. And I've had young women say to me, you know, I'm running hard after Christ, but I don't see the serious young men who are serious about relationship with the Lord. Sociologists have studied that the time when people get married has just gotten older and older. Young men are maturing at an older time now. And it's like they almost decide, okay, I'm 32 now and it's time to settle down and I'm done playing.

I think part of the issue is the church hasn't really accepted that this is a serious problem. Christian schools haven't accepted that this is a problem. These institutions need to catch a vision that this really is an issue. Interestingly, I just listened to a Jordan Peterson interview where he's admonishing the church to address this issue. And I thought that was so fascinating that this secular psychologist sees a problem and he starts off saying, I know this is strange for me to talk to the church, but I have a message for the church because it needs to be said. And he's basically admonishing us to help young men catch a vision for life. And that just came out within the last 10 days, I think.

Host: David Wheaton 18:32

Yes, that is convicting for the church to be hearing from someone like that who says a lot of truthful things, but is not even a believer in Christ to be admonishing the church in that way. Dr. Ernie Baker is our guest today here on the Christian Realview, the author of *Marry Wisely, Marry Well*. We're talking about preparing boys for marriage and fatherhood. Just back to that last answer you gave there, as you were answering that question, I was thinking about what we often see in evangelical churches today in the youth group or even at church camps. So boys go into the youth group, they go off to church camps, and many times the youth group or the church camp can be very unserious. It can be 95% play in a chapel message at night or something that's meant to entertain or be humorous. There's not a really substantive muscular message and an intentionality about trying to get them away from being boys forever and actually growing up.

Host: David Wheaton 19:36

So you see this. I think it's rife within the evangelical movement. All right, we'll take a short break to tell you about some ministry resources. Nothing wrong with boys having fun, but what is the balance of recreation and amusement to biblical substance that will prepare them to be overcomers in a world filled with temptation, testing, and trials? Can we have much higher expectations for what teens can be and do? As a weightlifter, only get stronger through regular training and increased resistance on the bar. So a boy or a girl needs resistance and responsibility to be strong enough to be an effective ambassador for Christ in this world. The flesh for most children and the willingness of some parents will resist the effort to do this, but it must be done. More with Dr. Ernie Baker on preparing boys for marriage and fatherhood coming up. I'm David Wheaton, and you are listening to The Christian Worldview Radio program.

Host: David Wheaton 22:50

Welcome back to The Christian Worldview. I'm David Wheaton. Be sure to visit TheChristianworldview.org where you can sign up for our weekly email and The Christian Worldview Journal print publication, order resources for adults and children, and support the ministry.

Our topic today is preparing boys for marriage and fatherhood. And our guest is Dr. Ernie Baker, chair of the Master of Arts and Biblical Counseling at the Masters University and the author of *Marry Wisely, Marry Well*. You have mentioned a couple times already today, Ernie, about having a vision. You call it a discipleship mentality. How do you communicate that to a boy, especially a boy who's grown up in this culture where there hasn't been any emphasis on that, everything else is telling him just have fun and amuse yourself in life, and recreate and so forth. How do you communicate that and get that across to someone who has little interest in growing up and is not being influenced that way. And maybe a young boy who's grown up in a Christian home like you did, son of a pastor, who wasn't really truly saved until he was 17 years old?

Guest: Ernie Baker 24:01

My closest experience with this is with our family. So we just had conversations as our kids were growing up and trying to cast a vision with them for their life, talking to them about what has God designed you to do. So I had those conversations with my boys in their teenage years what is your giftedness and us talking to them about design and giftedness from God, helping them to see that if they were going to be a successful man they needed to have a good work ethic. Some people might think this is horrible but we made our kids do chores. We had a garden and our boys knew how to sweat and dig with me with shovels. When I had house repairs they were following me around the house and seeing how I did house repairs and I have a lot of good memories of those type of things. I think it's just as you're working with a young man, your son or maybe it's a young man that the church lines up with you so that you can kind of mentor and disciple that you're just letting him live life with you and you're showing him what it means to be a godly man and he catches a vision for what manhood is.

Host: David Wheaton 25:19

It sounds like Deuteronomy 6, the Shema, where you shall teach them diligently to your sons, and shall talk of them when you sit in the house, and when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.

You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house, and on your gates. It's a lifestyle of discipleship one on one and taking the time to invest into that boy. That's very well said. Dr. Ernie Baker is our guest today here on The Christian Worldview as we talk about preparing boys for marriage and fatherhood. He's the author of a book we're going to be discussing here in a second Mary Wisely Mary Well also is the chair of the Master of Arts and Biblical counseling department at the Masters University.

Ernie you talked about work ethic for boys and how important it is because that affects everything. If you have a good work ethic it's going to affect not just how you actually do labor so to speak and mowing lawns and so forth but how you do your school work how you approach your faith how you read the Bible do you have the discipline and work ethic to dig in and be a good workman in the Word. So how do you teach a boy a good work ethic? And I know you mentioned modeling it yourself and taking them around but again what if there's not lots of interest in that what do you do to teach a work ethic and then part two of that question is how do you get boys out of that Peter Pan mentality where they just want to play all the time and instead is it doing serious things like going on mission trips or what kinds of things can be helpful to give boys a broader vision for what they need to become?

Guest: Ernie Baker 27:04

We talk to our kids a lot about the heart in counseling we call comfort loving a heart issue meaning that you're living for relaxation. Matthew chapter 12 talks about out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks then the good man out of his good treasure brings forth what is good. So the Lord equates heart with treasures. Some people treasure comfort and ease, some people treasure pleasure.

So I would try to challenge my boys with what are you serving? Building into them a bigger view of life that life's not just about chilling out and relaxation. Life is about investing life is about living for a cause everybody lives for some type of cause people get excited about causes. Even if a young man is investing in video games, that's his cause because that's where his energy and time is going. He gets excited about whatever the video game is that he is committed his life to. So our challenge to our children and me to my boys was guys we have a bigger thing to live for, we're living as worshipers of the true and living God and if you're going to fulfill your life calling He's designed you for something big. He has a great story for your life that He's already writing. But if you're going to embrace that you cannot be a comfort lover. That cannot be part of your worldview.

Then for me as a father I had to discipline them. Some parents are afraid of being the authority and it's almost like they're afraid of their children. I would just remind parents God gave you the authority it really doesn't matter what your child thinks because God gave you the authority to be a parent and just embrace the authority and say hey we're going to go out and dig some ditches together or we're going to go out and rake some leaves together. If they don't do it well then of course there's some type of discipline that goes with it. So parents have to be parents and not allow their child to get away with the Peter Pan mentality.

Host: David Wheaton 29:10

In your book Marry Wisely Marry Well, you have three divisions I'll say you compare the process of building a house to the preparation to marry well this is according to the Biblical counseling coalition who did a review

of your book. They said there's a foundation to build your life on Christ, handling attractions or desires wisely, and understanding God's purpose for marriage. Number two, there's preparation to building a house so to speak. Developing character, emotional and spiritual maturity, and practical skills needed for a healthy relationship. The third thing that was mentioned was choosing and building, making a wise spouse decision and laying the groundwork for a stable lasting marriage. Now Ernie with boys the desires flee youthful lusts. The the culture is constantly trying to pervert, their peers will be telling them things that want to pervert God's design for sexuality, for marriage, for dating. Everything. That's how the world operates. Whatever God has established Satan, the world, and the flesh wants to pervert that. So what are some good things to be teaching boys and really at what age should that start, regarding relationships with girls well before marriage so that they can marry wisely and marry well?

Guest: Ernie Baker 30:37

The key verse for the book is Proverbs 24:3,4 which say by wisdom a house is built and by discernment it is firmly established, and by knowledge the rooms are filled with all precious and pleasant riches. The book is based upon just what are foundational issues and obviously that's things like relationship with Christ salvation and what is biblical wisdom. The question you just asked that's a biblical wisdom question. I'll go back to what I said before with our boys that was having conversations even a little bit before pre-puberty but then as they were getting to around 11, 12, 13, I started to incrementally have conversations with them about sexual issues, understanding what was going on in their body and then it built up to as they were getting more and more interested with girls and as they were getting focused in on one girl with each of my boys talking to them about what does it mean to love a wife. By the grace of God I hope that they saw me modeling that with their mother because I wanted to model for them being gentle. I wanted to model for them understanding their own heart what the Bible means about the heart and how they can be deceived by their own heart talk to them about sexual self-control, and what are the motives about for sexual self-control. For example as a young man, be motivated by "I need to control my sexual desires out of love for my future wife" based upon future promises, and I believe that God has said that sex in marriage is the best design. So therefore I'm going to trust God's promises and I'm going to live my life now controlling myself for the sake of my future wife. Then once they're in a relationship, or how do you treat a young woman with love and respect like a gentleman. Again I hope they saw me trying to model that with their mother opening the car door for her and treating her with love and respect. I'm especially concerned about things like domestic violence. I've counseled a lot of domestic violence cases I believe that a wife should feel safest with her husband of anybody in the world. So domestic violence just breaks my heart, and I wanted to train my boys. Here's how you treat your wife so that she feels safe in your arms, you're her shepherd you love her. We treat women with respect, gentleness etc.

Host: David Wheaton 33:14

That was a great brief explanation of what some things we can do to nurture boys the right way toward marriage and fatherhood. What do you hear within the church community the evangelical world that that's sort of common Christian thinking so to speak, but may not necessarily be biblical about raising boys to be good husbands and fathers. What are some things that when you hear this just go the other way, this is not good sound biblical advice. Are there things that you hear that brings that to mind?

Guest: Ernie Baker 34:00

I think some people might downplay the effect of pornography and they might say boys will be boys, but that just breaks my heart if, somebody in the church would have that mentality that this is just something boys are going to do, or I hope your listeners can take it but just being a little bit blunt that well masturbation is just something that young men do. They can't really control themselves they need an outlet that's just not godly biblical thinking. Scripture teaches self-control motives for good self-control and I need to be teaching my sons that or young men that and especially because of the plague of pornography that is so rampant it's just a scourge in our culture right now.

Host: David Wheaton 34:42

It is and that made me think of what God told Cain in Genesis chapter four He said after he had murdered his brother so Cain became very angry and his countenance fell and the Lord said to Cain Why are you angry? Why is your countenance fallen? If you do well will not your countenance be lifted up if you do not do well sin is crouching at the door and his desire is for you but you must master it. This is I think the message what you're saying to boys is that no, you don't just go the way of the world the way of your flesh you must master it through the power of the supernatural resources God gives us in His word and through prayer and through the Holy Spirit that we're to overcome our sinful wrong desires that we all have.

One of the things I was thinking about in this age of fatherlessness Ernie or for boys growing up who don't either have a father or they don't have a good father what can a sound local church do in situations like that? Because a father is so critical that's many many hours of the day in a home they're around a boy if they don't have that how can the church step in to help in some way I've said it before but I'm going to say it one more time.

Guest: Ernie Baker 35:56

The churches have to catch a vision for this that I don't think churches have quite caught how bad the issue is but once they catch a vision for this they could start matching up young men that are in fatherless homes with a godly man in the church then they just live life together. He's inviting that young man to his house to do work projects he's seeing how this older godly man leads his family and so it becomes a mentoring type of relationship. But first churches are going to have to admit that this really is a problem. There's a book that came out years ago called The Trellis in the vine and we don't want to just build trellises and keep developing programs we want to have vine growth and so we develop trellises that then support vine growth and the vine growth would be the next generation. Church is having a heart for young men and I would be remiss if I didn't say praise God for godly single moms who are working hard to raise their children but many of them recognize this is not ideal. This is not how God designed the family to be the women that I know of that have been in that situation they would welcome godly men being in the lives of their boys.

Host: David Wheaton 37:22

Now Ernie you're going to be coming up to the Minneapolis St. Paul metro area this August August 21st and 22nd to be the speaker at the Wisdom, Romance and the Single Years conference targeted for ages high school through the 20s. We actually didn't do it this year but in past years we've done a course with our radio program called the Overcomer course for young adults focusing on the most important issues that young adults need to implement or be working toward in their life to be a godly young man or young woman. And so this conference really picked our interest it's at Anchor Bible church and just a quick description here

preparing for marriage isn't about finding the right person. It is more importantly about becoming the right person. Our culture often tells young people to make a list of the qualities they want in a spouse but far too often overlooks the deeper question what kind of spouse do I need to be this is a Friday evening and an all-day Saturday here we'll give more details. We have it at our website as well. Tell us about this conference and what you're going to be really focusing on and why someone who's in high school or in their 20s should really make it a priority to come to this.

Guest: Ernie Baker 38:39

Thanks for asking I'm really excited because this is the 10th anniversary year of when Mary Wisely Mary Well came out so what this stimulated is an update to the book and we're going to have a brand new version for the attendees an updated 10th anniversary edition and I'm updating the research of what's actually happening in the family and updating just some other areas about sexuality and gender confusion that were not issues when I wrote the book 10 years ago. So what we're going to be emphasizing is two questions from the book. How do you get yourself ready for marriage without being in a relationship which there's all kinds of things that young people can do even before they're in a serious relationship. You can be working on conflict resolution skills you can be working on communication skills you can be working on understanding your own heart and the motives of your heart like Proverbs 4:23 says guard your heart for from it flow the issues life. So we'll be working on what can you do to get yourself ready for marriage. And then secondly how do you make a wise choice of a spouse? So what is biblical wisdom? And then how does that apply as you're thinking about a life partner like Rose is for me, she is my adventure buddy and my life partner. You're committing to here's the person you're going to live life with. So what kind of questions should you be asking about this person that you're going to make a covenant with to live life with. Those are the some of the themes that will come up during the conference.

Host: David Wheaton 40:18

Well we have all the information at our website TheChristianWorldview.org about the wisdom romance and the single years conference at Anchor Bible Church here in Plymouth, Minnesota, which is on the west side of the Twin Cities metro area. Ernie we just thank you for coming on The Christian Worldview radio program today to discuss this topic of preparing boys for marriage and fatherhood. We are very much looking forward to seeing you in Minnesota in August 21st and 22nd and thank you for your your work in the Biblical counseling department at the Masters University and for your books as well. All of God's best and grace to you.

Guest: Ernie Baker 40:54

Thank you, David. Blessings to you as well.

Host: David Wheaton 41:00

You can order Ernie Baker's book Mary Wisely, Mary Well at our website TheChristianWorldview.org or by giving us a call at 888 646 2233. We're planning to have him on the program again later this summer to go deeper into his book as it pertains to making the second most important decision of your life who you marry which is after the most important decision as to whether you will believe or not believe in Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord. The former decision on who you marry will greatly impact your life here. The latter decision to believe in Christ will greatly impact your life here and also determine whether you live for eternity in

heaven or hell. Jesus told Nicodemus in John chapter three truly I say to you unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. If you haven't been born again give us a call or visit our website and click on the page what must I do to be saved. All right short break and then in the final segment we'll hear a portion of what my late father told our family on Christmas night back in 2019. I hope you'll stay tuned for that. I'm David Wheaton and you are listening to The Christian Worldview Radio program.

Host: David Wheaton 44:26

I'm David Wheaton. Today's program and past programs, along with transcripts and short takes, are available at TheChristianWorldview.org. While there, you can also sign up for our weekly email and The Christian Worldview Journal print publication, order resources, and support the ministry. Our topic today is preparing boys for marriage and fatherhood. And in the final segment, I found a very special piece of audio that I think exemplifies what Ernie Baker was talking about with regard to shepherding your family. On Christmas evening in 2019, our entire family gathered at my home to celebrate Christmas, and also my dad's 88th birthday. My dad was born on Christmas Day back in 1931. All 16 members of our family were there. Dad and mom, my three siblings, Marnie, Mark and his wife Gina, and their two teenage boys, my brother John and his wife Aaron, and their four children, who were in their late teens and early twenties at the time. And also my wife Brody and I, and our son Tommy, who was only six years old at the time. After dinner and dessert, as we were seated in the living room in front of the fire, my dad pulled out a piece of paper with something he wanted to say to the family, particularly the seven grandkids. I must have had my phone nearby because I recorded what he said, just about six minutes long, and my dad is imploring our family to believe in Christ, to obey Him, and to proclaim Him to others. Here's my dad about seven years ago.

Audio Sound Bite: Bruce Wheaton 46:05

There's a culture all around us that we live in right now. You cannot change the culture, and we cannot be part of it. The culture is evil. It's very evil. It's unchangeable. In fact, what happens is a culture ends up changing you. The culture is trying to say things like abortion is okay. Sexes living together is okay. Divorce is okay. Homosexuality is okay. And many genders and transgenders are okay. And kids growing up today that are Tommy's age and a little older, they're being brought up in a society where it's okay. You cannot let that culture affect you. You have to know where you stand in Christ and how you believe, and that you have to rebuff the culture in your life and share with others. Because there's people all around us that need to know Christ. I mean, they're thick out there.

Romans 12: 2 says that we're not to be conformed to this world, but we're to be transformed by the renewing of our minds, that we might prove in ourselves what is good and acceptable and perfect will of God. And I don't mean to be preachy tonight, but I think it's very important that I mention this because there may be some here who really have not received Christ as their personal Savior. And you are my my relatives, my grandchildren. If I had nothing else to say, it would be that. In Psalm 77, one of the verses says, Who is so great a God as our God? Salvation and eternal life is everything. I look forward to that. You know, I could die. I thought I would. I never thought I'd get to be 88. Never. With all the heart surgery's I've had and many illnesses and so forth. I was fully accepting in myself that I'd be dead long ago. I shouldn't be here today. You

know, even you're 88. You know, that is really old. We as Christians, taking in the Word of God daily, listening to people we respect and preach, you take the Word in daily and then you want to share it.

There must be some people you know in your businesses and where you work or at school. My tax advisor, who is a Roman Catholic, received Christ and he's thrown away the Catholic Church, no longer gives money to it, and has grown a lot, and has a growing heart for Christ. That's why we're here. Keep that in mind. We're here to see others come to Christ. This is not something we hide away. But there have been times along the way that I've thought to myself, am I really a Christian? Is this just a way of life? Do I do I know what it really means to be a Christian? Am I a biblical Christian? You know, or or did I just walk an aisle or make a profession or hope that I was? So you those kind of doubts come into your mind that can happen. It happen to me.

But right now, I am so sold on what Jesus Christ did for me that I can't even entertain a a negative thought like that any longer. I know that if I were to die today or tomorrow or the next day, I know where I'm going. I'm so thankful that I can leave this world. I guess I just wanted to say that tonight on my heart, that my responsibility as patriarch of of this family is for me to bring admonishment like this because my very own I want to see in the kingdom of God some day. I know that will be real to me when I get there. I do really appreciate this nice party tonight. I hope the words I've said will burn into you. Don't assume your own salvation, know for sure. As many as received Him, they can be called sons of God. That's so important, not just for old people, it's important for all of us. And to share your faith. When is the last time you told someone else, unsaved, about Jesus Christ?

Well, thank you for coming to my party, but for really acknowledging today is really the birthday of the Savior. It's my birthday, I share it with Him. But He is the Christ.

Host: David Wheaton 51:47

Again, that was my father back in 2019 on Christmas evening as we celebrated the birth of Christ and my dad's eighty-eighth birthday. Just over three years later, in February 2023, God chose to bring my dad home to heaven. We all miss him so much, and my mom misses him most of all. My dad had been deeply transformed by Christ since his mid-twenties when he understood and believed the gospel, and then for decades he traveled down the road of sanctification to the celestial city. He was a great and godly father. And that is what a father instructing his children and grandchildren sounds like. It starts with an authentic and growing love for Christ on my dad's part, that then results in a burden for his family to embrace the salvation and truth that so transformed him. He thought he was nearing the end of his earthly life, and he was, and he wanted to shepherd the two generations following him.

Thank you for joining us this Father's Day weekend on The Christian Worldview and for your support of this nonprofit radio ministry. Until next time, think biblically, live accordingly, and stand firm. The mission of The Christian Worldview is to sharpen the biblical worldview of Christians and to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ. We hope today's broadcast encouraged you toward that end.

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