**FOCUS** in 2020

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**LOVE WHERE YOU LIVE**

***Part 1 – Home***



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

I love these quotes about what home is …

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

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

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

Homes are both **physical** and **spiritual**.

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

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

God **blesses** what He **possesses**.

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

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

*…* ***choose this day whom you will serve****, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell.* ***But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord****.”* Joshua 24:15

**In the New Testament it is called an oikos – household.**

**This process of giving to God, asking for blessing and sharing with other is found** in one of my favorite stories in the Bible is the feeding of the five thousand in **Matthew 14:13-2; this miracle is also told in Mark, Luke and John We discover** that there was a boy with the five loaves and two fish.

**…** **16**But Jesus said, “**They need not go away; you give them something to eat.**” **17**They said to him, “**We have only five loaves here and two fish.**” **18**And he said, **“Bring them here to me.” 19**Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass, and taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and **said a blessing**. Then he broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. **20**And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up twelve baskets full of the broken pieces left over. **21**And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

**Step One** – Open your **hand** and give **all** that you have to God.

*We have only five loaves here and two fish … Bring them here to me*.

**Step Two** – Ask **God** to bless what is His.

*… he looked up to heaven and said a blessing*. A little or a lot.

**Step Three** – **Share** what He has **given** you.

*Then he broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds.*

**Step Four** – **Watch** what He does and **give** Him the praise.

… *they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up twelve baskets full of the broken pieces left over*.

I want the **return** without any **investment**. I want the **crop** without ever **planting** a single seed. Paul reminds us …

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

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

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

The opposite of love is not hate … it is **apathy**.

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

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

I am so glad that **Jesus did not get distracted or disinterested** in the Father’s redemptive purpose for His life.

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

How can you **love where you live** this week?

**Here are two ideas:**

**First**, this is really easy.

**1.** **Put some chairs in the front yard.**

Spend one or two evenings (or as many as you can) in the front yard. Put out some extra chairs, six feet apart, sit outside with your favorite beverage and watch what God does.

**2. Help a neighbor in need.**

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

1. Open our hands and say, This is yours, God.
2. Ask God to bless to it.

3. Give 10% as a tithe and then take 10% and give it away to someone in need. So if you got $2,400 or more (if you have kids), that $240+ tithe and $240+ share and $1,920+ to provide for whatever you need.

4. Share that $240+ to help a neighbor you find has a need, to buy food for KCM, to make masks or to make something to help more people. Or give the whole amount to a single mom or dad that just lost their job. **It could be really fun to gather your children together** and practice what we have learned this morning.

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

Amen.