



**CENTRAL JAMAICA CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS
DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY MINISTRIES
FAMILY TOGETHERNESS WEEK OF PRAYER AND UNITY
September 5-11, 2026**

SERMON 1

Theme: *The Family Under Siege: Rebuilding the Walls of Togetherness.*

Main Scripture: Nehemiah 4:6

"So built we the wall; and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof: for the people had a mind to work." (KJV)

The Family is God's First Institution

Long before there was a nation called Israel, a temple, or even the church, God established the family. As heaven's oldest institution, it was created in Eden's perfection to embody the love, unity, and fellowship found within the Godhead. Genesis 2:24 recounts how God united Adam and Eve in the first marriage, laying the groundwork for every Christian home.

The enemy understands something that many people overlook: if he can divide the family, he can weaken the church; if he weakens the church, he can influence society.

We are living in a time when homes are under relentless attack. Families may live under one roof, yet members often feel emotionally distant. Parents and children may share meals, yet scarcely share meaningful conversations. Husbands and wives may occupy the same house, but their hearts are separated by silence, resentment, and distraction.

Satan is not merely attacking marriages; he is attacking the spiritual influence of the home. He seeks to replace prayer with pressure, communication with conflict, and love with loneliness.

That is why Nehemiah's story is so relevant. Jerusalem's walls had been broken down, leaving the city exposed to danger and disgrace. Likewise, many families today have broken walls, walls of communication, trust, forgiveness, and spiritual unity. But Nehemiah declared, **"Let us rise and build"** (Nehemiah 2:18). Today, God calls us to rebuild the walls of togetherness in our homes.



Ellen G. White tells us

"The restoration and uplifting of humanity begin in the home. The work of parents underlies every other. Society is composed of families, and is what the heads of families make it." (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 349)

Our homes will not become united simply because we wish them to be. Unity requires intentional effort, Christ-centred love, humility, and daily dependence on the Holy Spirit.

Today we will examine **three barriers that threaten family togetherness** and discover God's plan for rebuilding what has been broken.

1. The Barrier of Broken Communication

Scripture: James 1:19–20

"Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry."

Communication is more than just talking. It is listening, understanding, encouraging, and expressing love. Many families communicate every day about schedules, finances, chores, and school, but rarely about feelings, fears, hopes, or faith; we need to move from just talking to connecting on a deeper level.

Broken communication often begins subtly. Busy schedules replace meaningful conversations. Smartphones compete with eye contact. Assumptions replace honest dialogue. Over time, silence becomes normal, and misunderstandings multiply.

James instructs believers to be **quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry**. Healthy communication begins with listening before responding. Yet in many homes, people are quick to defend themselves and slow to understand one another.

How Broken Communication Affects Family Unity

- Misunderstandings increase.
- Trust begins to erode.
- Emotional distance grows.
- Children seek guidance elsewhere.
- Marriages become vulnerable to temptation.
- Family worship loses its warmth and effectiveness.

Many families do not fall apart because they stopped loving one another. They fall apart because they stopped communicating with grace.

The enemy delights in silence because silence often breeds suspicion.



Paul counsels:

Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying (Ephesians 4:29).

Words can either build walls of protection or create cracks through which the enemy enters.

Ellen White writes:

"Kindly, cheerful words have a power far greater than many realize."
(*The Adventist Home*, p. 437)

A home where members speak kindly, listen patiently, and pray together becomes difficult for Satan to divide.

2. The Barrier of Misplaced Priorities

Scripture: Matthew 6:33

"But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness..."

One of Satan's greatest strategies is not necessarily to make families sinful but to make them so busy that they neglect what matters most.

Many families spend hours on work, school, sports, entertainment, and social media, yet struggle to find fifteen minutes for family worship.

We often schedule God around our activities instead of scheduling our activities around God.

Jesus reminds us that God's kingdom must come first. When Christ occupies the centre of family life, everything else finds its proper place.

How Misplaced Priorities Affect Family Unity

- Family worship disappears.
- Meals together become rare.
- Parents become emotionally unavailable.
- Children seek identity from peers or the internet.
- Couples gradually grow apart.
- Spiritual leadership weakens.



The greatest threat to many homes today is not persecution; it is distraction.

Busyness is not always productivity.

Technology is not always connection.

Success is not always significance.

Joshua understood the importance of spiritual priorities:

"As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." (Joshua 24:15)

Notice he did not say, "As for me, I will serve the Lord." He included the entire household.

Ellen White wisely counsels:

"The greatest evidence of the power of Christianity that can be presented to the world is a well-ordered, well-disciplined family."

(The Adventist Home, p. 32)

Families that pray together, worship together, and intentionally spend time together develop stronger bonds that withstand life's storms.

3. The Barrier of Unresolved Conflict

Scripture: Ephesians 4:31–32

Ephesians 4:31-32

31 Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamour and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. 32 Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

Conflict is unavoidable.

Bitterness is optional.

Every family experiences disagreement. The issue is not whether conflict exists but how it is handled to produce positive outcomes.

Some homes carry wounds that are years old and have never been resolved.

A harsh word spoken to a child that has never been forgotten.



An apology that was never given to a spouse.

A betrayal never forgiven, and it continues to fester strife and bitterness.

An argument continually revisited because there has been no resolution of the problem.

Bitterness acts like rust. It slowly destroys the strongest relationships from within.

Paul commands believers to replace bitterness with forgiveness because forgiveness reflects the grace we ourselves have received from Christ.

How Unresolved Conflict Affects Family Unity

- Love becomes conditional.
- Trust is damaged.
- Children experience emotional insecurity.
- Anger becomes the normal language of the home.
- Spiritual growth is hindered.
- The witness of the Christian family is weakened.

Jesus taught:

"Blessed are the peacemakers" (Matthew 5:9).

Peace does not happen accidentally.

Someone must choose humility. Someone must rise to the occasion and be the Christian.

Someone must forgive first!

Someone must say, "I was wrong."

The cross demonstrates that reconciliation always involves sacrifice and forgiveness.

Ellen White once wrote:

"There is no surer means of weakening spirituality than by cherishing envy, suspicion, fault-finding, and evil surmising." (*The Adventist Home*, p. 440)

Families become strong not because they never experience conflict, but because they resolve conflict God's way, with truth, grace, repentance, and forgiveness.

Conclusion: Let Us Rise and Build

When Nehemiah surveyed Jerusalem, he did not deny the damage. The walls were broken, and the gates had been burned. Yet he did not remain discouraged. Instead, he declared:



"Come, and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem" (Nehemiah 2:17).

God gives the same invitation today.

Perhaps the walls of communication in your home have crumbled.

Perhaps priorities have shifted away from Christ.

Perhaps unresolved hurts have lingered for years.

The good news is that the God who restored Jerusalem can restore your family.

Psalm 127:1 reminds us:

"Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it."

No amount of wealth, education, or success can substitute for Christ as the foundation of the home. Families become truly united when Christ is at the centre. As each family member draws closer to Jesus, they inevitably draw closer to one another.

Ellen White offers this encouraging promise:

"If the members of the family would seek to become what God desires them to be, they would come into close relationship with one another."

(The Adventist Home, p. 179)

A Call to Rebuild Together

Today, God is calling every family to rebuild the walls of togetherness.

1. Rebuild the wall of **communication** by listening with love, speaking with kindness, and making time for meaningful conversations.
2. Rebuild the wall of **right priorities** by restoring family worship, protecting time together, and placing Christ at the centre of every decision.
3. Rebuild the wall of **reconciliation** by choosing forgiveness over bitterness and peace over prolonged conflict.

Parents, our children need more than your provision; they need your presence.

Children, honour your parents with respect and openness.

Husbands and wives, remember that your marriage is a covenant before God, reflecting Christ's love for His church.

Let us make Joshua's declaration our very own:



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

If your desire today is to invite Christ to rebuild the walls of your home and to commit yourselves to greater unity, forgiveness, communication, and spiritual togetherness, I invite you, as families, couples, parents, children, and individuals, to stand together as we dedicate our homes afresh to the Lord.

May every home represented here become a place where Christ reigns and flourishes; where forgiveness is practised, and families stand united until the day we are gathered in our eternal home with Him.

Invite families at the altar and end with a prayer for family togetherness.