

A script from



“What Have I Built?”

by
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- What** While fishing from his newly restored pier, a man wonders if his family can be restored from his past neglect.
Themes: Family, Fatherhood, Marriage, Parenting, Husbands
- Who** Man
- When** Present
- Wear (Props)** Fishing pole
Wooden bench or deck chair
- Why** Proverbs 11:28-30, Job 7:16, Matthew 6:24
- How** This monologue is a man’s thought process over the past months and years. He starts out pleased with himself for having built a pier, but as he walks through the past events of his family, his tone gets heavier and builds until the end. Start off with a lighter tone, giving yourself somewhere to go until the end, being careful to pace yourself. Be careful not to drag the dialogue out too long.
- Time** Approximately 4 minutes

Man, fishing from a pier. He is deep in thought.

Man: It's a beautiful morning. I think it's going to be hot later in the day...typical summer weather. I haven't had a bite all morning...but that's okay.

That guy a few houses down seems to be having some luck. I'll have to go ask him what he's using for bait...later.

I did a good...no, I did a great job building the pier back. That storm last year really tore it apart! The water came up so high that the whole pier...or pieces of the pier were up against my house. What a mess!

But I'm good with my hands, and I enjoy doing carpentry work...so rebuilding the pier gave me the perfect project for this past spring. Every afternoon when I got off from work, I was here working until dark. I even added a few things that weren't on the old pier...like those steps...and that bench.

I couldn't believe what a great job I did...yeah, great...so great...so great that I didn't see my marriage coming apart just like the pier did!

I'm busy down at the office...I have to stay busy there...they need me to keep all the contracts lined up! I'm working hard so that I can provide for my family...is that so bad? Without this job, we wouldn't be able to live in this house on the water, or have the boat, or have this pier...or any of this...stuff that we need!

My wife has always taken the kids to their ball games and school things. She has never seemed to mind, because she knows I have to be at work. The kids understand why I can't be everywhere with them. They never complain to me...or say much of anything to me.

And when I do get a little free time, I don't waste it away. Like this past spring, I spent every minute that I could rebuilding this pier...not for just me...but for the family...so we could enjoy it and have fun this summer.

I work hard, and do the best that I can to build a life for my family...to give them all they need!

Pause.

So why did she tell me last night that she doesn't know me anymore? Why did she say that I was distant? Why did she say that she couldn't go on like this?

I'm not any different than I was when we got married. It's just that there are more things for me to take care of now.

I've got to keep up the house. There's always something that needs replacing or repairing. I'm supposed to save for college for the kids and retirement for us. It takes a lot of effort to know just the right time to buy a car. I make decisions so that we can have some of the extras in life...like the boat. I am a great provider!!!

Pause

It's not supposed to hurt now. We made it through the tough days when we didn't have much money. We did our share of scraping to make ends meet. The kids are old enough now to enjoy the things I can buy for them. My wife and I are at the age that things should get easier...and we just grow old together.

Why doesn't life make sense?

I don't know what to do next. Is there any hope for us?

Maybe I should try to move away and find a job building piers! I seem to do that better than being a husband and a father!

My life feels like this fishing...I've been at it for so long, and I haven't caught anything!

Lights fade.