

Faithful Parents and Unfaithful Children

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake from multiple sources)

Introduction:

- A. Eph. 6:1-4 - Raising children is one of the most difficult things you may do.
 - 1. "Why do some good people have bad children?"
 - 2. It is not my intent to cause pain to parents whose children have never embraced the faith or have abandoned the faith
 - 3. I am addressing parents whose children are at home, over whom they presently have influence while they shape their lives
- B. In the very first family, Cain apostasies, "Cain went out from the presence of the Lord" - Gen. 4:16

I. NOT ALL GOOD PEOPLE ARE GOOD PARENTS

- A. It gives me no pleasure to say that, but this is true
 - 1. Just being a good person does not necessarily mean one is going to be a good parent
 - 2. It is a false assumption that being a good person ensures that their children will be good, too
 - 3. Ez. 18:1-20 - A child can no more inherit wickedness than he can inherit righteousness
- B. Children come into his world morally pure; it is through a process of personal choices that they enter into sin.
 - 1. The job of a parent is to help that child in the decision making process.
 - 2. Some good people do not properly help in the decision making process.
 - a. I believe in helping children mature by involving them in decisions for their future.
 - b. I believe in allowing children to experience the consequences of their decisions
 - c. But a line must be drawn. If a child is not mature enough to make a decision that will affect their eternal souls, then parents are obligated by God to step in and help.
 - 3. You would not give a child an open box of poison, or a loaded gun, or a pornographic magazine; extend that reasoning to all matters that can endanger the future of the child's souls
- C. Good people whose children went astray
 - 1. Eli was a Levite, a priest of God serving in the tabernacle.
 - a. One of the greatest prophets of Israel was entrusted to his care to be raised and taught -- Samuel
 - b. No question that Eli was a good man; however, he was not a good parent to his older sons - 1Sam. 3:13, 2:22-24
 - c. His areas of vulnerability:
 - 1) Failed to restrain or rebuke them; possibly afraid of losing their affection?
 - 2) Realized the problem too late

- d. He was busy being high priest, guiding Israel in the wild times of the judges, and being a guardian to Samuel.
- e. It's not good to save the world or a community or a congregation, and lose one's family along the way.
- 2. David was a man after God's own heart - 1Sam. 13:14
 - a. Yet he failed as a father.
 - 1) One of his sons assaulted and defiled his own sister - 2Sam. 13:1-20
 - 2) In response, another son murdered his own brother in revenge - 2Sam. 13:21-36
 - 3) His favorite son led a revolt that nearly toppled David's throne - 2Sam. 15:7-12
 - b. The irony is that David defiled a woman and committed murder
 - c. By his example, David, though a good man, was a poor father.
- 3. Others: Isaac's son Esau, Samuel's sons (1Sam. 8:3), Hezekiah's son Manasseh (2Kings 20:21 - 21:2).

II. OVERCOMING OBSTACLES TO GOOD PARENTING

- A. Is there a surefire method of parenting that will guarantee that children will grow up in the Lord?
 - 1. No. Children are free moral agents, too, and will occasionally decide to abandon the faith of their fathers for no evident reason that can be attached to fathers and mothers
 - 2. But diligently following the wisdom of the scriptures will give them the best chance to grow up in the Lord
- B. List of behaviors of parents who raised their children in the Lord, in no particular order
 - 1. The absence of profanity at home and all other places - Eph. 4:29
 - 2. A warm love between parents - Eph. 5:29
 - 3. A love for the brethren and sacrificing time to help them - 1Peter 2:17
 - 4. Only morally upright forms of entertainment at all times - James 1:22
 - 5. Having an active prayer life
 - 6. Extending hospitality - Rom. 12:13
 - 7. Faithful in worshipping with other Christians, refuse to use cop out excuses to stay home - Heb. 10:24
 - 8. Involved in saving the lost and other works of the local church
 - 9. Rejoicing in the fact that you are Christians - Phil. 4:4
 - 10. Make the effort to get your kids to get-togethers and activities that involve other Christians their age.
 - 11. Take children to gospel meetings and help organize classes for their age group
 - 12. Limit the amount of time that you are away from them.
 - 13. Have regular and deep spiritual conversations with your children - Deut. 6:7
 - 14. Do not turn your head when you see your children taking the first few steps down the wrong path.

15. Make it clear by word and example that God's laws take precedence over your opinions.
16. Make it clear that your marriage takes precedence over your career.
17. Worship and Bible study takes precedence over ALL sports, hobbies, school activities, and homework.
18. Honoring God and obeying Him takes precedence over everything else - John 14:15
19. Have fellowship and relationships with faithful Christians
20. Talk about your faith
21. Convictions take precedence over convenience.
22. Make it a priority to work with an energetic and growing congregation.
Do not choose a congregation because of convenience or shortness of the service
23. Remember the impact of your choice of career or residence on your children. Remember what living in Sodom did to Lot's family
24. Don't sacrifice their eternal future for short term interests
25. Mom and Dad need to be equally strong
26. Love your children - 1Cor. 13:4-7
27. Discipline your children - Prov. 22:15
 - a. He said the rod of corrections, not the pat of disappointment or the verbal shouting match or the insipid time out - Prov. 23:13
28. As much as is reasonable, protect them from the influence of the world
1Cor. 15:33

Conclusion:

- A. Parents have been entrusted with shaping the lives of their children
 1. Psalm 127:3-4
 2. You only have them for a short time; do better
 3. If you haven't been taking parenthood seriously, then do so with determination today.