

What Will Your Children And Grandchildren Be Spiritually?



(SLIDE #1) WHAT WILL YOUR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN BE SPIRITUALLY?

Introduction:

- A. What A THRILL To See People Who Have No Heritage In The Lord's Church Come To Faith And Live A Faithful Christian Life!
 - 1. They have such a STRONG LOVE for the Truth!
 - 2. They cultivate such a devoted conviction to Jesus and His Word!
 - 3. I admire the tenacity of so many of those people; I love their devotion to Truth!

- B. What A Thrill It Is To See People Who Have Been Raised By Grandparents And Parents, Are Taught About Christ, Come To Faith, And Live For Christ Just As Their Family Did!
 - 1. I hear some speak SO disparagingly about those "raised in the Church!"
 - a. It is as if "they just never lived!"
 - b. "They just don't understand life and the world!"
 - c. "They don't have a faith of their own!"
 - 2. That is certainly true of SOME who were raised "in the Church;" it is NOT ACCURATE about SO MANY who are deeply in love with the Lord and the Truth!

- C. (Slide #2) Amazing Traits Of Families: (▶) Generational Faithfulness; (▶) Generational Unfaithfulness; And (▶) Rebellion Against The Previous Generations!

- I. (Slide #3) God Designed The Home So That Generational Faithfulness Would Occur!
 - A. God Designed Man As A Spirit Who Would Have A Longing For Him And For Spirituality.
 - B. He Revealed His Wisdom And Power In Nature; He Revealed Himself Through The Revealed Word And Through "The Word", Jesus!

1. Rom. 1:20 “For since the creation of the world His invisible *attributes* are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse,”
 - a. His power is unfathomable to man -- it is greater than all the power we see in the universe!
 - b. His Godhead or Divine nature -- His wisdom, His creative genius, His artistic mind are absolutely incredible!!!!
 - c. Ps. 19:1-6 “The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork....”
 - d. Ac. 14:17 “Nevertheless He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good, gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.”
 1. Look at the rain cycle and the seasons.
 2. Without them, you would not have food!

2. Through the Bible, He has told us who He is!
 - a. He tells us about His nature -- a Divine spirit!
 - b. He tells us about His personality, His holiness and holy traits, His authority, His wishes, and His expectations.

3. And in the incarnation of Jesus, we see Deity in flesh!
 - a. Is. 7:14 “Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.”
 - b. Jn. 14:9 “He who has seen Me has seen the Father;”
 - c. Jn.12:45 “And he who sees Me sees Him who sent Me.”

- C. He Wants Men To Come To Know Him And Serve Him!
 1. Ecc. 12:13 “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man’s all.”
 2. Dt. 10:12,13 “And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, ¹³and to keep the commandments of the LORD and His statutes which I command you today for your good?”
 3. Mi. 6:8 “He has shown you, O man, what *is* good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justly, To love mercy, And to walk humbly with your God?”

- D. He Expects Previous Generations (Parents And Grandparents) To Teach Children About Him!
 1. Teach about Him and about His Will!

- a. Ps. 78:5-7 “For He established a testimony in Jacob, And appointed a law in Israel, Which He commanded our fathers, That they should make them known to their children; ⁶That the generation to come might know *them*, The children *who* would be born, *That* they may arise and declare *them* to their children, ⁷That they may set their hope in God, And not forget the works of God, But keep His commandments;”
 - b. Dt. 6:7 “You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.”
 - c. Dt. 6:6-9 “And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. ⁷You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. ⁸You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. ⁹You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”
 - d. Dt. 11:18-21 “Therefore you shall lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul, and bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. ¹⁹You shall teach them to your children, speaking of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. ²⁰And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates, ²¹that your days and the days of your children may be multiplied in the land of which the LORD swore to your fathers to give them, like the days of the heavens above the earth.”
 - e. Dt. 32:46 “and He said to them: ‘Set your hearts on all the words which I testify among you today, which you shall command your children to be careful to observe--all the words of this law.’”
2. This was true about Israel teaching their children about God delivering them from Egypt.
 - a. Ex. 10:1,2 “Now the LORD said to Moses, ‘Go in to Pharaoh; for I have hardened his heart and the hearts of his servants, that I may show these signs of Mine before him, ²and that you may tell in the hearing of your son and your son's son the mighty things I have done in Egypt, and My signs which I have done among them, that you may know that I *am* the LORD.’”
 - b. Dt. 6:20-24 “When your son asks you in time to come, saying, ‘What *is the meaning of* the testimonies, the statutes, and the judgments which the LORD our God has commanded you?’ ²¹then you shall say to your son: ‘We were slaves of Pharaoh in Egypt, and the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand; ²²and the LORD showed signs and wonders before our eyes, great and severe, against Egypt, Pharaoh, and all his household. ²³Then He brought us out from there, that He might bring us in, to give us the land of which He swore to our fathers. ²⁴And the LORD commanded us to observe all these statutes, to fear the

LORD our God, for our good always, that He might preserve us alive, as *it is* this day.”

3. It was true about remembering the Passover in which God’s people were spared from the 10th Plague -- Death of the Firstborn.
 - a. Ex. 12:26,27 “And it shall be, when your children say to you, ‘What do you mean by this service?’ ²⁷that you shall say, ‘It *is* the Passover sacrifice of the LORD, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt when He struck the Egyptians and delivered our households.’” So the people bowed their heads and worshiped.”
 - b. Ex. 13:14,15 “So it shall be, when your son asks you in time to come, saying, ‘What *is* this?’ that you shall say to him, ‘By strength of hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. ¹⁵And it came to pass, when Pharaoh was stubborn about letting us go, that the LORD killed all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man and the firstborn of beast. Therefore I sacrifice to the LORD all males that open the womb, but all the firstborn of my sons I redeem.’”
4. New Testament charges:
 - a. Eph. 6:4 “And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.”
 - b. Tit. 2:4 “that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children,”
5. A vital “proverb:” “Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it.” Pr. 22:6
6. Joel 1:3 “Tell your children about it, *Let* your children *tell* their children, And their children another generation.”

II. (Slide #4) God NEVER Intended For The Home To Produce Generational Unfaithfulness!

- A. The Home Was To Bless A Husband And Wife In This Life And To Prepare Their Children To Meet God!
- B. Sadly, Godless Homes Produce Dysfunction, Uneducated And Undisciplined Children Who Cause Great Trouble In Society And Who Rely Upon Society For Continual Assistance.

C. (Slide #5) A Contrast Of 2 Families, The Juke And Edwards Families, From New York State:

New York state sociologists studied two families-the Max Juke family of New York and the family of Jonathan Edwards from Connecticut and Massachusetts.

The head of the Max Juke family was an unbeliever who had no obvious sense of morals, a hard drinking lazy and slothful man. He married a girl with similar values. Over 1200 of their descendants were studied:

280 were professional vagrants

140 were criminals; 130 of them were sent to a penitentiary for an average of 13 years each

7 of them were murderers

100 were alcoholics

128 were prostitutes

Of the 20 who learned a trade, 10 learned it in a state prison

64 were in the poorhouse; 142 received state aid

300 died prematurely

None of them made a significant contribution to society

On the contrary they cost the state of New York \$1,308,000

What about the Jonathan Edwards family? He came from a very religious family and married a girl with similar values.

100 became clergy men, missionaries, or theological professors

Over 100 became college professors

Over 100 became lawyers

30 became judges

Over 60 became physicians

Over 60 became authors

There were 75 army or navy officers

13 became presidents of universities

There were numerous giants of industry

80 were elected to public office

Several became members of congress

1 was a U.S. Treasury official

3 became senators

1 became Vice-President of the United States

D. Joshua Clearly Set Out For Israel That Parents Make Decisions That Will Lead Their Families Either TOWARD God Or Away From Him!

1. Before he died, Joshua said to Israel: "And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that *were* on the other side of 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.” Josh. 24:15

2. Sadly, a study of the book of Judges reveals how so many families of Israel were grossly influenced by sin and sinners and turned away from God!

III. (Slide #6) Younger Generations Can Use Their Choice Wisely Or Unwisely!

A. Every Person Has Choice About His Spiritual Life!

1. Every person can choose to obey God or to reject Him!
2. Ezek. 18:5-17 vividly portrays that each person has choice!
 - a. Verses 5-9 -- a man can choose to serve God! If he does; God will bless him!
 - b. Verses 10-13 -- a man can REJECT the godly ways of his father and the ways of holy God; God will punish him!
 - c. Verses 14-17 -- a man can reject the evil ways of his father and turn to the ways of God; God will bless him!
3. Observe -- every person makes the choice of the course of his life! Will he be godly or wicked?

B. Each Person Can Chose To Serve God!

1. They can respect their parents, respect their God, and live faithfully for Him!
 - a. Eph. 6:1-3 “Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ²*‘Honor your father and mother,’* which is the first commandment with promise: ³*‘that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.’*”
 - b. I Tim. 4:12 “Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.”
2. Young people in Godly homes can imitate their parent’s faith.
 - a. Isaac following the faith of Abraham.
 - b. David following the faith of Jesse.
3. Young people can come to faith in God and choose to serve Him even if their parents have not been godly
 - a. Ruth, a Moabitess, came to know the God of the Bible.
 1. She loved Naomi, her mother-in-law, and was fascinated by her faith!
 2. Ru. 1:16-18 “But Ruth said: ‘Entreat me not to leave you, *Or to turn back from following after you; For wherever you go, I will go; And wherever you lodge, I will lodge; Your people shall be my people, And your God, my God.* ¹⁷Where you die, I will die, And

there will I be buried. The LORD do so to me, and more also, If *anything but* death parts you and me.’¹⁸When she saw that she was determined to go with her, she stopped speaking to her.”

- b. Jonathan chose to be a godly man and friend of David when his father, King Saul was such an angry, ungodly man!

C. Each Person Can Reject What He Has Been Taught.

1. Absalom.

- a. He turned against God; he rebelled against God and his father, King David!
- b. He stole the hearts of the people of Israel and ran his barefooted father out of Jerusalem!

2. Solomon.

- a. He was David’s son and the next king of Israel.
- b. God’s charge to Solomon when he became king: “Now if you walk before Me as your father David walked, in integrity of heart and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded you, *and* if you keep My statutes and My judgments, ⁵then I will establish the throne of your kingdom over Israel forever, as I promised David your father, saying, ‘You shall not fail to have a man on the throne of Israel.’⁶*But* if you or your sons at all turn from following Me, and do not keep My commandments *and* My statutes which I have set before you, but go and serve other gods and worship them, ⁷then I will cut off Israel from the land which I have given them; and this house which I have consecrated for My name I will cast out of My sight. Israel will be a proverb and a byword among all peoples. ⁸And *as for* this house, *which* is exalted, everyone who passes by it will be astonished and will hiss, and say, ‘Why has the LORD done thus to this land and to this house?’⁹Then they will answer, ‘Because they forsook the LORD their God, who brought their fathers out of the land of Egypt, and have embraced other gods, and worshiped them and served them; therefore the LORD has brought all this calamity on them.’” I Ki. 9:4-9
- c. Sadly he married 700 wives and 300 concubines; they were idolaters who led him to rebel against God and to practice idolatry! I Ki. 11:1-8

3. Eli’s sons:

- a. This old man was a priest and judge.
- b. His sons committed fornication with worshipers who came to the Tabernacle and refused to follow God’s rules for how much of the sacrifice they could take. Sadly he did not chastise them! I Sa. 2:12-17; 22; 29; 4:10-22

4. Samuel’s sons:

- a. He did not discipline his sons as he should.
- b. They perverted justice as they judged the people. I Sa. 8:1-3

- c. Their actions caused the people to demand a complete change of government; they wanted a king! I Sa. 8:4-6

IV. (Slide #7) What Will PROMOTE Generational Faithfulness?

- A. Parents Who LOVE Having Children And Long To Guide Them To God And To Heaven!
 1. Hannah: I Sa. 1:27 “For this child I prayed, and the LORD has granted me my petition which I asked of Him.”
 2. Pr. 4:1-4 “Hear, *my* children, the instruction of a father, And give attention to know understanding; ²For I give you good doctrine: Do not forsake my law. ³When I was my father’s son, Tender and the only one in the sight of my mother, ⁴He also taught me, and said to me: ‘Let your heart retain my words; Keep my commands, and live.’”
 3. Let you children hear and see that you genuinely are grateful for them and that your ultimate goal is to help them go to Heaven!
- B. A Father and Mother Who Deeply Love The Lord, Show Their Faith, Love The Church, Are Faithful To All Worship Opportunities, And Live The Christian Life Daily.
 1. True faith and devotion are readily seen.
 2. Children realize that this is not just talk; it is not hypocrisy; it is faith!
- C. One Parent Who Is SO Devoted That His/Her Life Speaks Volumes About Faith.
 1. A Christian who is married to a non-Christian.
 - a. I Cor. 7:16 “For how do you know, O wife, whether you will save *your* husband? Or how do you know, O husband, whether you will save *your* wife?”
 - b. I Pet. 3:1,2 “Wives, likewise, *be* submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, ²when they observe your chaste conduct *accompanied* by fear.”
 - c. Eunice and Lois -- Eunice’s husband was a Greek; there is no evidence that he was a Christian! Ac. 16:1
 2. A single parent, a widow or widower.
 - a. Eunice and Lois taught Timothy!
 1. II Tim. 1:5 “when I call to remembrance the genuine faith that is in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am persuaded is in you also.”

2. II Tim. 3:15 “and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”
- b. Mordecai and his influence upon Esther!

D. Godly Parents Must Discipline Their Children!

1. I am NOT talking about spanking a child and if it is right or wrong.
2. TEACH them the ways of God!
3. Parents must be very careful that they do not CRAM religion down the throats of their children!
 - a. Parental attitude is CRITICAL!
 - b. Many youth have rebelled against the religion of their parents because they felt it was being FORCED on them - this is especially true in some very tradition laden denominations!
 - c. NEVER try to MAKE you children love God; give them a great example; show them reasons to truly be blessed by serving God!
 - d. Your attitude and your faith are vital for positive influence.
4. Show them His Will; talk about why It is Truth!
5. Talk about the wickedness of error and sinful living!
6. Pr. 3:12 “For whom the LORD loves He corrects, Just as a father the son *in whom* he delights.”
7. Talk about God’s punishment of rebellion and disobedience!
8. Parents cannot just let their kids decide if they will go to church or not; you don’t do that about school, nutrition, etc.!

E. Individual Christians And Congregations Must Show Young People How Much We Care For Them And Want To Help Them To Be Spiritual!

1. The closer generations are, the stronger the influence is upon younger generations!
 - a. Think about Paul’s influence upon Timothy, Titus, Luke, et.al.
 - b. Think about Naomi’s influence on Ruth!
 - c. Think about Mordecai’s influence on Esther.
2. Congregations must create an atmosphere where young and old are important; where young and old Christian’s talents are used, and where young people are encouraged and inspired to mature and to have goals to become men and women who have great impact upon and influence in the Church!

3. Urge young people to serve God because they LOVE Him, not just because their parents are Christians.
4. Ps. 89 talks about David as a king.
 - a. Ethan, the Ezrahite wrote this Psalm; sadly, many of David's descendants were not being faithful to God and His Covenant!
 - b. God had been faithful to His side of the Covenant, verses 1,2,5,8,14,24,33,49; He had promised that the Throne of David would continue, verses 35,36.
 - c. Even though most of David's descendant's had rejected God and His Covenant, He would still keep His Word that David's seed would endure forever and His Throne would continue! 35,36
 - d. God would certainly punish those who were sinful! 30-32
5. Why is this SO serious? Dt. 29:18 "so that there may not be among you man or woman or family or tribe, whose heart turns away today from the LORD our God, to go *and* serve the gods of these nations, and that there may not be among you a root bearing bitterness or wormwood;"
6. Our new Lads To Leaders program is significant to help young people grow their skills, their confidence, their leadership skills, and their love for God!

V. (Slide #8) What Are THREATS To Generational Faithfulness?

- A. Parental Spiritual Apathy!
 1. Parents, if you are weak spiritually, or if you are indifferent and not engaged, you CANNOT EXPECT your children to be devout!
 2. Parents who are not deeply in love with the Lord and the Church will most likely not have devoted children.
- B. One Parent Who Does Not Love God, Who Ridicules His/Her Mate, The Lord, The Church, And Christianity!
 1. A parent who does not love Truth can cause great confusion in the hearts of children.
 2. If you ridicule the Lord, the Truth, and the Church -- you may lead your children to do the same thing.
 3. You will answer for that confusion and ungodly attitude!
- C. Parents Who Refuse To Call Sin, Sin!

1. Many parents will condone what their children are doing even though they have total rebelled against and left God.
 2. Remembers what Jesus said, “He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me.” Mt. 10:37
- D. Parents And Adults Who Promote Secular And Worldly Things (Sports, Recreation, Etc.), Worldly Ideas, Concepts, And Practices ABOVE The Ways Of God!
- E. Young People Who Do No Seek God From A Sincere Heart!
- F. Young People Who Allow The Godless World To Influence Their Hearts And Minds To Doubt God And His Word Or Who Ridicule True Spirituality!
- G. Those Who Grew Up In Congregations, Knew Truth, And Then Allowed Themselves To Reject The Truth And To Condone Error!
1. Sadly, I watch people leave the faith!
 2. I hear their language become the language of error instead of the language of Truth.
 3. I see them become bitter toward Truth and accepting of everything else -- they promote the idea that those who are disobeying God are “spiritual” and are going to Heaven; they promote the idea that those who are obeying God are lost!
 4. They begin to go further and further away from Truth -- in doctrine, in view about morality, in what they accept, in places they go, and in practices in which they participate!

Conclusion:

- A. Be Determined To Be Loyal To God!!!
- B. Help Future Generations Love Him Too!
- C. So, What Is Your Life Promoting?
 1. Generational Faithfulness?

2. Generational Unfaithfulness?
 3. Rebellion Against Previous Generations?
- D. One Who Has Made Sinful Choices Can Make Another Choice -- To Repent And Turn To God!
1. Ezek. 18:21-23 ““But if a wicked man turns from all his sins which he has committed, keeps all My statutes, and does what is lawful and right, he shall surely live; he shall not die. ²²None of the transgressions which he has committed shall be remembered against him; because of the righteousness which he has done, he shall live. ²³Do I have any pleasure at all that the wicked should die?’ says the Lord GOD, ‘*and* not that he should turn from his ways and live?’”
 2. Do you need to repent and come home to the Lord, to the faith, and to the Church?