

"WHERE ARE YOUR CHILDREN?"

INTRO: It is common to hear people say "THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCH AND OUR NATION IS OUR CHILDREN." That is so very true but the question we must ask is "WHERE ARE OUR CHILDREN?" For the sake of this sermon today let's be more personal and ask "WHERE ARE YOUR CHILDREN? Now the nature of this question does NOT have to do with the geographical location of your kids, but rather the SPIRITUAL CONDITION OF YOUR CHILDREN. **WHERE ARE YOUR CHILDREN SPIRITUALLY?** Over the past generation children have been turning away from their Christian families, from biblical values, from godly living and from the church in huge numbers. This has brought great concern to spiritual leaders all across America to the point that studies have been conducted to find out why children seem to be going away from biblical living. One recent study has found that **young people do not walk away from biblical values and the church after high school graduation, as many would think, but rather begin their walk away in the SECOND GRADE DUE TO THE FACT THAT PARENTS DO NOT, 1) TEACH THEIR CHILDREN SOUND BIBLICAL DOCTRINE AND, 2) DO NOT LIVE CHRIST-LIKE QUALITIES IN THE HOME!** Thus their decision to forsake the Lord does not come all of a sudden when they get their diploma but progressively grows for ten years until they are free to make their own decisions apart from their parent's expectations. Among the many serious ramifications of children departing from Christian values is the fact that THEY THEN BECOME LEADERS IN THEIR GENERATION OF HUMANISTIC AND EVEN ATHEISTIC PHILOSOPHIES that ultimately results in THEIR CHILDREN denying the TRUTH OF GOD AND THE SCRIPTURE. **SO WHAT CAN PARENTS DO NOW TO SECURE THEIR CHILDREN'S COMMITMENT TO CHRIST?**

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QUESTIONS FOR ALL PARENTS TO CONSIDER:

- 1) Where are YOUR children right now spiritually speaking?
- 2) Are YOUR children saved and serving the Lord right now?
- 3) Are YOUR children following the ways of the world right now?

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LET'S EXAMINE FIVE KEY PASSAGES ON CHILD REARING

- 1) Deuteronomy 6:4-7: **Parents are to DILIGENTLY teach their children the Word of God.**
- 2) Psalm 78:1-7: **Parents are to teach their children the works of God so that they will place their HOPE in the Lord.**
- 3) Proverbs 22:6: **Parents are to train up their children in the way they should go, that is in the WAY of the Lord.**
- 4) Ephesians 6:4: **Fathers (The OT word for "Parents") are to ENCOURAGE their children in the Lord.**
- 5) 2 Corinthians 12:14: **Parents are to provide FINANCIALLY for their children.**

I. PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES TO CHILDREN AT HOME

- A. Provide a Spiritual Atmosphere in the Home
 1. By Actively Training your Children in Biblical Truth.
 2. By Setting an Example before your Children of True Godliness.
 3. By Encouraging your Children to Grow in the Lord.
 4. By Leading your Children to Serve the Lord.
 5. By Challenging your Children to Consider Vocational Ministry.
 6. By Training your Children to Prepare for Adulthood.
- B. Provide Spiritual Oversight in their Lives
 1. In the Home: Are they Living for the Lord?
 2. In the Church: Are they Involved in the Church?
 3. In the Culture: Are they a Testimony for Christ?

ILLUSTRATION:

II. PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES TO CHILDREN WHO HAVE LEFT THE HOME

- A. The False Argument
 1. That once the children leave the home there is NO further responsibilities to perform.
 2. This is NOT Biblically Correct! Parental responsibility continues even AFTER YOUR KIDS LEAVE YOUR HOME!
- B. The Factual Aspect
 1. Though certain specific responsibilities may change, YOU WILL ALWAYS BE THE PARENT OF YOUR CHILD with certain expectations from God for you to consider.
 2. Many of those responsibilities are equivalent to what you would extend toward others in general, but are to be done with greater commitment.
 - a. Offer Edification - Romans 14:19
 - b. Offer Correction - Galatians 6:1

- c. Offer an Example - Philippians 4:9
- d. Offer Love - Titus 2:4
- e. Offer Prayer - James 5:16

QUESTION: **WHAT ABOUT ADULT CHILDREN WHO ARE NOT LIVING FOR THE LORD?**

- 1) Pray for them Earnestly.
- 2) Confront them Personally.
- 3) Enquire them Sincerely.
 - Ask if YOU have contributed to their turning from the Lord.
- 4) Confess to them Honestly
 - If you have contributed to their departure from the Lord.
- 5) Correct yourself Genuinely
 - Make the corrections in your own spiritual life if necessary.
- 6) Live before them Exemplarily
- 7) Commit them to the Lord Regularly

ILLUSTRATION:

LESSONS/APPLICATION:

- 1) The greatest of all honors is parenthood.
- 2) The greatest of all influence is parenthood.
- 3) The greatest of all responsibilities is parenthood.
- 4) The greatest of all ministries is parenthood.
- 5) The greatest of all efforts is parenthood.
- 6) The greatest of all sorrows is parenthood.
- 7) The greatest of all joys is parenthood.

IN PARENTING, WALK WITH GOD DAILY, GIVE YOUR BEST TO CHRIST REGULARLY, AND SERVE YOUR CHILDREN SACRIFICALLY.