

The Old Paths

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“Will Your Children Go To Heaven?”

Jarrold Jacobs

[Please read the article below by brother Daniel Whitworth. It is worthy of our consideration. -JJ]

Will Your Children Go To Heaven?

Daniel Whitworth

Eldesters all over the nation are concerned about the dropout rate of our young people. And well they ought to be. It is a tragic thing to see these precious boys and girls, who are so thrilled with Bible study as little people, grow cold and uninterested in the Lord's work as they grow older. Lately, several congregations have made in-depth studies of all the factors available concerning all their young people, with an eye to learning what might be done to help solve this problem. What do we need? More youth programs? More youth rallies? A special teacher?

From the material that has been published on these studies, it seems to me that one great central truth has begun to emerge. Faithfulness of the young person to Jesus doesn't have anything to do with special programs or teachers. It is not dependent on whether they are members of a large congregation or a small one. The single most important value is their own immediate family.

One congregation found that where both parents were faithful to the Lord, and that includes active interest in the local congregation's work, 93% of the kids remained faithful. On the other hand, if only one of the parents were faithful, that figure dropped to 73%. Where the parents were only what we call reasonably active in the Lord's work, only 53% of the young people maintained their faith.

Now here comes the shocker: in those cases where both parents attended only infrequently, the percentage of their children who remained faithful to the Lord dropped to 6%.

Want your children to go to heaven? Make sure you are leading them by your faithful example! (From: *The Southport Sounder*, 8/6/00, Troy Nicholson, editor)

Editor's Note:

This ought to open parents' eyes to their responsibility in teaching their children; not only in word, but also by example! Perhaps in the past we have not taken our responsibilities as parents as seriously as we ought. Now is the time for repentance and to change our attitude! If we lose our family to Satan, we've lost it all!

God told His people in the Old Testament that they needed to be busy teaching and instructing their children in the ways of the Lord, and to do so "diligently". They were to do it "when thou sittest in thine

house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up....thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates" (Deut. 6:7, 9). In other words, God expected parents to be busy and teach and instruct their children at all times. In connection with this, Solomon said, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Prov. 22:6).

In the New Testament, we read, "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4). To bring up means, "to rear up to maturity, i.e. (gen.) to cherish or train:--nourish" (Strong's). Nurture is, "tutorage; i.e. education or training; by impl. disciplinary correction:--chastening, chastisement, instruction" (Strong's). Admonition means, "calling attention to, i.e. (by impl.) mild rebuke or warning" (Strong's). "Of the Lord" means by or through His authority. Therefore, fathers are told to rear or train their children to maturity according to the authority of Christ. This is done by educating them (instructing) and offering rebuke for the purpose of correction. The "manual" or "guidebook" in this instruction and warning is the word of God, and not what man says. Yes, this is a "tall order", but each father who is interested in his children going to Heaven can stand up and meet the challenge!

Mothers also have a responsibility in this area. Timothy's mother and grandmother stand out as two righteous examples of godly mothers (II Tim. 1:5). Titus 2:4-5 also has applications with mothers teaching daughters what is right. It says in that passage, "That they (aged women, v. 3) may teach the

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young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed." Yes, this can be a "tall order" for mothers, but those interested in their children going to Heaven can meet the challenge and be successful before God.

As important as it is to teach verbally, let us not forget our example, our influence, on our children. Remember, according to the above article, it was those parents who were actively involved in the Lord's work that kept their children from slipping away into error. Christ said, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 5:16). Do we forget that this passage needs to be applied at home as well as "in the world"? What do our children see when they look at us? What works are we showing them? Perhaps we forget that the responsibility of the parent is not merely to rear up a productive member of society. Our responsibility as parents is to bring this soul to Christ, that both parents and children can see Heaven together. Let us not end up being a "statistic," but be active in the rearing of our children and in bringing them to Christ. Let us show them the joys of being a Christian, and encourage them to be a Christian as well. Can we think of anything greater than seeing our children go to Heaven so we can be with them in eternity with God?

"A pessimist is someone who complains about the noise when opportunity knocks."

- Leslie E. Sloan

A Squeak In The Pulpit

Steve Higginbotham

Recently, I read of an entry in an old church record of a business meeting. It stated: "A committee was appointed to investigate the squeak in the pulpit." Upon reading this, I couldn't help but think that today's world, even today's church, desperately needs more than a "squeak" coming from the pulpit. Now, as much as ever, we need the clear tones of the gospel resounding from our pulpits.

We are hearing far too much about churches who are selling out to the culture. The distinctive preaching of New Testament Christianity is seldom if ever heard in some pulpits. Sermons that challenge our morals, expound our doctrine, question our ethics, and rebuke our mediocrity are exchanged for sermons that have an air of religiosity, but are lacking in substance.

In I Chronicles 12:32, it was said of some of God's children that they

"understood the times." There remains a multitude of God's children who understand the times. They understand that now is not the time for a squeak in the pulpit. There are many godly elders, and godly Christians, who are demanding to hear more than a squeak from the pulpit. They have not bought into the idea that distinctive preaching has harmed the church. They want substance over style and flair. They want truth over entertainment. They want Biblical authority over pragmatism. And they would rather have the sometimes bitter truth over a watered-down gospel. To put it in the words of John MacArthur, they realize that the weakness of the pulpit today does not stem from frantic cranks who harangue about hell; it is the result of men who compromise and fear to speak God's word powerfully, with conviction.

There are many challenges that face the church today. If we are to rise up to the occasion and defeat our adversary, we must have a strong pulpit; Pulpits that will speak the truth in season and out of season, with all the love it can muster; Pulpits that will not compromise the truth; Pulpits that do more than just squeak!

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