

THE INFLUENCE OF THE HOME ON THE CHURCH

Aaron Beard
Trussville
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INTRODUCTION:

- A. Someone once observed: “The fundamental foundation of society is the home... As the home goes, so goes the society!”**
1. This statement, and those like it, is very true and can easily be observed today:
 - a. In schools – Discipline problems abound along with a lack of respect! Children are not being taught at home about authority & the teacher’s rule is not enforced!
 - b. In society – How many of the problems, especially among young people, go back to a lack of discipline at home, broken homes, or ungodly upbringing?
 2. The very same principle can be applied to the church – The building blocks of the church is the Christian home... As the home goes, so goes the church!
 - a. Parents need to take their responsibility seriously, first because in children they are molding hearts and minds with preparation for eternity!
 - b. It’s also an important work because the future of the Lord’s church depends on it!
- B. This morning I want us to examine our homes and see what impact our home is leaving on the church today! Does your home promote the health of the church or hinder it?**

I. THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCH DEPENDS ON YOUR HOME!

- A. We can see the influence of the home on the church by looking at the example of Israel:**
1. God’s people were often told to emphasize to their children the great works which they had seen God accomplish! **(Deut 4:9-10; Josh 4:21-24)**
 - a. God was not just interested in the faithfulness of THAT generation... But wanted to make sure that ALL subsequent generations remained faithful to Him!
 - b. Many of His instructions were meant to ensure faithfulness for generations to come
 2. This is why Moses gave the strong admonition to the Israelites before they entered Canaan... Their future depended on their homes! **(Deut 6:4-9)**
 3. Joshua understood that keeping Israel faithful began in the home **(Josh 24:14-15)**
 4. In the process of time, a generation arose who did not know the Lord! **(Judges 2:7-10)**
 - a. This is what many call “The Third Generation Syndrome” – The grandparents are faithful, the children are somewhat faithful, & then the grandchildren fall away!
 - b. They didn’t know God or the works He did for Israel... The parents failed teach their children! They didn’t teach God’s law & the trips weren’t made back to Gilgal!
 - c. When Israel forgot the Lord their God and fell away from Him the problem could be traced back to a failure in the home!
- B. Areas the future of local churches depending on the health of our homes in manifest:**
1. Most gospel preachers receive their foundation as a young person at home! **(2 Tim 1:3-5)**
 - a. When Paul found Timothy, he found a young man who had the foundation and was prepared to travel with him in preaching the gospel... His home provided that!
 - b. One may preach the gospel despite his upbringing - that’s the exception, not rule!
 2. Without healthy homes, there will be no men qualified to serve as elders! **(1 Tim 3:4-5)**
 - a. The qualifications of an elder are seen first in his home! His home prepares him for his work as a shepherd! His ability to serve in this way is proven in his family!
 - b. What keeps most churches from having elders – It’s most often because the state of his home and family disqualifies the man... A breakdown in the home!
 - c. When we see churches without elders, it’s not just a sad reflection on the churches, but a sad statement on the condition of the homes of God’s people!
 3. What if every home in the church produced what your home produces? **(Mat 7:24-27)**

II. WHAT KIND OF IMPACT WILL YOUR HOME HAVE ON THE CHURCH?

A. Will your home be a place that instills respect and honor in your children?

1. All respect & honor begins with learning respect honor in the home! (**Eph 6:1-3; Col 3:20**)
 - a. Respect and honor is what is right – It rests on the very nature of things! You are the parent and they are the children... That relationship demands it!
 - b. But God also demands it... It is a commandment from Him that carries promise!
 - c. Parents are responsible for demanding respect & honor from their children... A failure to do so is SIN! It tears apart a foundation they need laid for the future!
2. In instilling respect & honor, parents deserve more respect than their children's peers!
 - a. Some parents say, "I don't want to be hard on my child... I just want to be their friend, like any of their friends, so they'll come to me when they need me!"
 - b. Get this straight – It's good to be friendly to them... But FIRST you are their parent!
 - c. Children need to learn not to call their parents by their first names, not to argue with them when challenged, and not to speak degradingly to them!
3. Do they learn respect for God, His word, & worship? (**Ps 119:9, 11; Ax 10:33; Gn 41:14**)
 - a. Their respect for parents carries over to their respect for God – Learn to obey simply because authority has instructed them! Like, "Because I said so!"
 - b. What does it teach if we allow those who are old enough to play through services, sleep through sermons, & not participate? What if we allow our children to dress immodestly for services or in a way that does not show respect?
 - c. How can we expect attitudes to change as they get older if we allow this to go on?
 - d. In all of this we must remember the power of example – You can communicate the right things all day, but if you don't live it, the opposite lesson is being taught!
4. What a child learns about respect at home is carried over to the Lord! (**1 Pet 1:13-14**)

B. Will your children learn a knowledge of God's word & a foundation for faith?

1. Parents have the responsibility of shaping their children's hearts! (**Ps 127:1-5; Pr 22:6**)
 - a. Children are a heritage in their parent's hands before being released into the world!
 - b. This is a great challenge – It can be very rewarding but also very humbling! You aren't just shaping the rest of their lives but are preparing them for eternity!
 - c. This tells us that God's people can have strong Godly families; but, it's not going to happen without work, effort, attention, diligence, prayer, and God's help!
2. Parents goal is to lay a foundation that will lead them throughout their life! (**Prov 6:20-23**)
 - a. **Illustration:** Even today I constantly hear my parent's teaching on certain matters!
 - b. Children have an empty storehouse upon which they will make life's decisions
 - c. Parent's duty is to stock the shelves with godly principles from which they can draw
3. While a parent lays this foundation, the choice of serving the Lord or living in the world is a choice the child has to make on his own! (**Phil 2:12**)
 - a. Your goal must be to show them WHY the way of righteousness is the right way
 - b. Your goal must be to instill in them the truth from God's word so they can clearly see, so they will learn it, and so their faith in it will be their personal faith!
 - c. Your goal must be to teach them from a young age about God and His love for them so that as they grow old they will develop their own love for Him!
4. The problem is that too many parents wait till its too late to lay this foundation! (**Eph 6:4**)
 - a. Some don't teach their children when they are young cause they think they won't remember or they don't have time! Others may not bring them to Bible class because it is a hassle... So the training is put off until they'll appreciate it more!
 - b. This results in a generation arising that does not know God or the mighty works which He's done! Parents failed to teach & failed to make the trips to Gilgal!
 - c. A preacher from a conservative church says we lose 50% of our kids! Here?

C. Will you home be a place that instills proper Christian priorities?

1. Parents cannot force their children to have spiritual priorities; however, they can bring them to a point where they desire to seek the kingdom in order to please God!
 - a. Make them see the joy that is to be had in seeking the kingdom (**Matthew 13:44**)

- b. You can train your children from the time they don't make their own decisions that spiritual things, the kingdom of God, ALWAYS comes first! (**Matthew 6:44**)
- 2. Think about what your home teaches your children about spiritual priorities: (**Deut 6:8-9**)
 - a. On family vacations... Do you take God with you? Do you worship when out of town? Study and pray while on a trip? - Some say, "But we're on vacation!"
 - b. How much emphasis does your home place on excelling in sports, school, and in social matters? Is a greater emphasis placed on spiritual excellence?
 - c. How often do they see you rearrange your schedule to go to ball games or do recreational activities? How often do they see you do this for spiritual things?
- 3. For 18 years a children is brought up in a home where other things come first... They learn that other things matter more & the parents wonder why the children fall away or never obey the gospel in the first place! You brought them up to love the world!

D. Will your children learn the danger and serious nature of sin?

- 1. Parents must teach sin is not something to be played around with! (**Prov 6:20-21, 27-29**)
 - a. Some parents act like disrespect, temper fits, anger, etc are funny... They will actually laugh at it! Others see sin as just a part of growing up – WRONG!
 - b. They need to fear their parent's discipline and learn that sin matters – Eventually that respect must be moved to God, His punishment, & the sacrifice of Jesus!
 - c. They must learn early on that sin is a big deal! That sin brings forth pain, agony, suffering, & death! That sin has eternal consequences! That sin does matter!
- 2. Children must learn that there is accountability for their actions! (**Prov 13:15**)
 - a. Think – What does it teach if you are always running to their rescue to bail them out of any trouble they face to keep them from facing the consequences?
 - b. They must learn sin is serious & always brings harm! Discipline is intended to make them see wrong actions & attitudes results in pain and consequences!
 - c. Parents must see to it their children seek forgiveness from those they hurt, fix their mistakes that cause damage, and own up to their sins!
- 3. Their attitude toward sin and correction is most often learned by what they see at home!
 - a. What if in the home they hear their parents plotting how to "sin" and get away with it? What if they watch their parents work to skip services & cover it up?
 - b. If children never see their parents confess and repent of their mistakes they learn to cover things up! If their parents deal with sin correctly, they learn to do that!
 - c. Just think about David – His children learned very well how to sin, how trick others, and how to cover up their sins and they eventually repeated those actions!

E. Will your children learn the true joy and purpose of Christianity?

- 1. Take inventory – What does your children see Christianity as in your home?
 - a. Do they it as a suit and dress that hangs in the closet... It comes out once or twice a week, is ironed to look nice for others, & afterwards goes back in the closet?
 - b. Do they see Christianity is as a habit – Spiritual things are done because that's what we've always done & that's all we know? Doesn't truly change your life!
 - c. Do they see is as a necessary evil or a bore? Go to church cause you have to! Do lessons cause you have to! Stay away from certain sins cause you have to!
- 2. You need to remember the great impact of the things you say around your children!
 - a. If you are constantly saying negative things about the church, they will be molded into thinking that nothing is ever right... Only seeing the bad, not the good!
 - b. If they hear grumbling about the drudgery of having to give back to the Lord, having to assemble, or keeping pure... They will learn its to be dreaded!
 - c. If they hear griping about the preacher, elders, deacons, or the way members are they will likely grow up with that attitude toward those people!
- 3. Your children learn what it means to be a Christian from watching you! (**Passage**)

CONCLUSION: Many of the problems we face in churches today stem from a breakdown in our homes! If the future of the church depended on your home alone, what would the future be bright or bleak?