

Faith & Family Lesson #3

April 2011

Ps 127

1 Unless the LORD builds the house,
They labor in vain who build it;
Unless the LORD guards the city,
The watchman stays awake in vain.

The parent makeover

Introduction

A pastor was called to counsel a Dad who was having trouble with a teenager. His daughter was showing disrespect and disobedience. Both attended church. When the pastor asked if the Dad had prayer with his daughter about the situation, there was silence.

Many parents go to church, but they don't bring the most important thing home: faith!

The question is not *if* we are passing things on to our children, but *what* are we passing on?

Every parent is a teacher and mentor.

Unless the LORD builds the house, They labor in vain who build it; (Psalm 127:1)

1. Who has the influence?

For the past several decades, faith building in children has centered around the church and its programs: children's ministry, SS classes, teachers, youth ministry pastors, youth camps, etc. Churches are marketed by emphases on their children's and youth programs.

Several families have joined our church recently because their previous churches did not have these ministries.

Question: Has this approach been successful in building faith in youth? Why do two-thirds of youth leave the church when they leave home and one-third never return?

Who has the most spiritual influence on children?

Mother	77%
Father	55%
Pastor	50%
Grandparents	30%
Sunday School	26%
Youth group	24%

Mothers and fathers have two to three times more influence than any church program.

If a child's faith is not formed by a lifestyle lived at home, by late teens the faith they experience was a "church program."

Martin Luther: "Most certainly parents are apostles, bishops, and priests to their children, for it is they who make them acquainted with the gospel."

**Can you identify a living breathing disciple of Jesus today?
Would your child point to you if asked this question?**

Did you have a model to follow when growing up?

Confession of a pastor: "The church has failed to enable parents to build faith at home."

Why the church must empower parents:

- Parents have the most influence.
- Secular education is no longer based on a biblical worldview.

- World media destroys Christian and family values.
- Most individual's belief system is set in place while they are children.

Who has the greater influence? Parents.

Therefore the church must never replace the parent in the faith-building process but dedicate itself to equipping and enabling parents to fulfill this God-called task.

2. Family faith-building begins with you

The *home* is the place where faith must be *modeled* through the parent's personal relationship with Christ.

Deut 6:4-7

4 "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one!

5 You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.

6 "And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. 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.

Your God, your heart, your soul, your strength – all of this is personal.

Our teenager's faith is a reflection of our own.

Where is Jesus in relation to your home? Standing at the door and knocking or sitting at the table and in the family room?

The makeover in your family begins with the makeover in your heart. ***Let's remodel our homes!***

3. The tools for the makeover

- ✓ The master plan or blue print: Holy Bible
Get into the Word personally and with family.
- ✓ The Master builder guiding you: Jesus
Jesus is with you and in you. Strengthen that relationship.
- ✓ The crew of skilled workers and volunteers: the Church
Do life and building faith in children with others.
- ✓ Assess your resources. Your Home Depot is well stocked.

Summary:

1. Mom and Dad are the top influencers.
2. Children's faith most likely reflects their parent's faith.
3. God provide the tools to build faith at home.
4. Give yourself to this most exciting and rewarding adventure of your life.

Discussion starters

Activity handouts