

## "Passing on the Faith"

Every Christian wants to go to heaven, and they want their children to go to heaven as well. Hello, I'm Phil Sanders, and this is a Bible study "In Search of the Lord's Way." Today we're looking at the need to pass on the faith.

Welcome to In SEARCH of the Lord's Way! We're here to search the Scriptures for God's will, because we love the Lord and want to please Him. Jesus said in John 14:15, "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments." We carefully examine the Scriptures to know what the Lord commands. You see loving Him means listening to Him and serving Him every day. Thanks for taking time with us today. We want to be a part of your life each week.

God blessed our home with four precious children. Jackie and I never considered our children as burdens but as blessings. We were happy to pass on our faith in Jesus Christ to our children. We prayed that they would mature and pass on the faith to their children. When children are small, they see their parents' faith and commitment. When parents are committed to God, their children are more likely to be committed. Little children may not understand all the reasons why they should believe, but they know by their parents' behavior whether God matters.

As children reach elementary school, they want to be like their parents and identify with their parents' faith. In middle school, they begin questioning things and searching for reasons to believe. They realize that some don't believe in Christ or take the Bible seriously. They see Christians who profess faith but fail to practice it. Well, this causes questions, and so parents must help their children find answers to their questions and work through their problems.

1 Peter 3 and verse 15 says, "but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence." Children usually ask their parents first for answers about their faith. What are you doing to pass on the faith to your children?

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The Edmond church will now worship in song, we'll read from Deuteronomy 6 verses 4 to 9, and we'll explore the need to pass on the faith.

Our reading to comes from the book of Deuteronomy chapter 6 verses 4 through 9.

"Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one! You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates."

That was the teaching of Moses to the people of Israel and it's good sense for us. Let's pray together. Oh Father we're thankful that You are our God and that You have loved us and help us to love You with all our heart and soul and may Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. In Jesus name, Amen.

The book of Deuteronomy contains three lengthy speeches that Moses gave to Israel shortly before his death. Now these lessons reveal his desire for Israel to remain faithful to God and serve Him with all their heart and soul. Now every godly leader and every godly parent wants those who follow Him to continue in the faith. Moses said in Deuteronomy 6 verses 1 to 3, “Now this is the commandment — the statutes and the rules—that the LORD your God commanded me to teach you, that you may do them in the land to which you are going over, to possess it, that you may fear the LORD your God, you and your son and your son’s son, by keeping all His statutes and His commandments, which I command you, all the days of your life, and that your days may be long. Hear therefore, O Israel, and be careful to do them, that it may go well with you, and that you may multiply greatly, as the LORD, the God of your fathers, has promised you, in a land flowing with milk and honey.”

Moses soon died after these speeches, and God chose Joshua to lead Israel into the Promised Land. God promised in Joshua 1 verses 6 to 8, “Be strong and courageous, for you shall give this people possession of the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. Only be strong and very courageous; be careful to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so that you may have success wherever you go. This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success.”

Well, the people remained faithful to God during the life of Joshua. Judges 2 and verse 7 says, that “The people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who survived Joshua, who had seen all the great work of the LORD which He had done for Israel.” Now for a while things went well; but Judges 2 verses 10 to 12 says, that “there arose another generation after them who did not know the LORD, nor yet the work which He had done for Israel. Then the sons of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD and they served the Baals, and they forsook the LORD, the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods from among the gods of the peoples who were around them, and bowed themselves down to them; thus they provoked the LORD to anger.”

One generation may be faithful, while another generation falls away and does evil. Through the history of Israel, one can see how the nation went back and forth in their devotion to God. We must devote ourselves to the Lord and to the spiritual training of our children, so they will not forsake the Lord and follow the people around them.

God gave to parents the primary responsibility of spiritually training their children and teaching them the will of God. God said of Abraham in Genesis 18 and verse 19, “For I have chosen him, so that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice, so that the LORD may bring upon Abraham what He has spoken about him.” The apostle Paul said to Christians in Ephesians 6 and verse 4, “Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.”

Now there are several reasons to instill Christian values and standards in our children. First, we must help our children understand God and His Word and that they are the ultimate authority. The word of God must be impressed upon our hearts if we are to impress them upon our children’s hearts. The word of God applies to every situation in life. And no one is better suited to model and apply God’s teaching to every area of life than a parent. Parents cannot lead their children where they are not going. And that’s the reason why we must teach them the Word of God. Romans 10 and verse 17 simply says, “So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.”

The command in Deuteronomy 6 and verse 8 to bind God's Word "as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontals on your forehead" emphasized the constant remembrance and attention. They should keep the Law before their eyes constantly, so that wherever they looked and whatever they did, they would remember God's teaching. In our complex and confused world, our children need the constant morals and values of God's Holy Word. Psalm 119 verse 105 says, "Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path." We must establish Biblical guidelines, so that our children will know right from wrong. We must also teach them discretion between what is wise and what is foolish.

Second, we must give our children the family skills that they will need as parents. We rear our children to be Christians and to be examples for their children. They need to know how to be good spouses and good parents. They will learn it from Scripture and from our example. Oh, times change, but knowing how to listen, to love, to forgive, and to be a Christian never changes. Your children will likely parent your grandchildren the way that you parented them. Solomon said in Proverbs 1 verses 8 to 9, "Hear, my son, your father's instruction, and forsake not your mother's teaching, for they are a graceful garland for your head and pendants for your neck."

Third, we must open the door to a personal relationship with God. Solomon said in Proverbs 22 and verse 6, "Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it." Children whose parents are faithful servants of the Lord are more likely to be faithful servants of the Lord themselves. Children whose parents remain close to God usually remain close to God themselves. The goal of spiritual training is to develop mature, loving Christians. And this is a lifelong pursuit and doesn't end just when the child is baptized. Baptism is not the end but the beginning of the Christian life. We must teach our children to stay faithful as long as they live.

Paul saw in the young man Timothy a sincere faith. Well, this didn't happen by accident! Paul wrote in 2 Timothy 1 and verse 5, "I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well." Now Timothy was faithful, because his mother and his grandmother taught him the Scriptures! Paul urged the young man in 2 Timothy 3 verses 14 to 17, "But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you have learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. Now all Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work."

Our children need what the Scripture gives. They need teaching, so they will know what is true and good. They need reproof to avoid and forsake the dangers of sin. They need correction so they can overcome the burdens and the guilt of sin. And they need training in righteousness, so they can be equipped for every good work. God wants not only to save us but also to transform our lives so that we will be a blessing to everyone that we touch.

You remember Solomon said in Proverbs 3 verses 1 to 8, "My son,' he said, 'do not forget my teaching, but let your heart keep my commandments, for length of days and years of life and peace they will add to you. Let not steadfast love and faithfulness forsake you; bind them around your neck; write them on the tablet of your heart. So that you will find favor and good success in the sight of God and man. Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD, and turn away from evil. It will be healing to your flesh and refreshment to your bones."

And last, we must give our children the practical key to life. Solomon taught his sons what he learned from his own father, David. The book of Proverbs provides God's wisdom for parents in so

many areas of life. Solomon is addressing his sons with needed lessons in life. Now good parents get involved with their children's education in every area of life. They expect their children to listen and to learn. Well if school, and sports, and driving a car are important to life, then one cannot take a casual approach to the spiritual instruction that will take them into eternity. Your children will learn God's way is best and the value of persistence in the faith, and patience by watching and listening to you.

Solomon said in Proverbs 2 verses 1 to 9, "My son, if you receive my words and treasure up my commandments with you, making your ear attentive to wisdom and inclining your heart to understanding; yes, if you call out for insight and raise your voice for understanding, if you seek it like silver and search for it as for hidden treasures, then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God. For the LORD gives wisdom; from His mouth come knowledge and understanding; He stores up sound wisdom for the upright; He is a shield to those who walk in integrity, guarding the paths of justice and watching over the way of His saints. Then you will understand righteousness and justice and equity, every good path; for wisdom will come into your heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul."

As you read the book of Proverbs, you can hear a father pleading with his son to listen to wisdom and to avoid the ways of sin. When children fail to listen to the wisdom of godly parents who know and love the Lord, and know the bible, they can wind up in a great deal of misery. Remember the prodigal son. But when children learn wisdom and insight, their lives can flourish.

Solomon, you remember, said in Proverbs 4 verses 1 to 13, "Hear, O sons, a father's instruction, and be attentive, that you may gain insight, for I give you good precepts; do not forsake my teaching. When I was a son with my father, tender, the only one in the sight of my mother, he taught me and said to me, 'Let your heart hold fast my words; keep my commandments, and live. Get wisdom; get insight; do not forget, and do not turn away from the words of my mouth. Do not forsake her, and she will keep you; love her, and she will guard you. The beginning of wisdom is this: Get wisdom, and whatever you get, get insight. Prize her highly, and she will exalt you; she will honor you if you embrace her. She will place on your head a graceful garland; she will bestow on you a beautiful crown.' Hear, my son, and accept my words, that the years of your life may be many. I have taught you the way of wisdom; I have led you in the paths of uprightness. When you walk, your step will not be hampered, and if you run, you will not stumble. Keep hold of instruction; do not let go; guard her, for she is your life."

Let's pray together. Oh, Father help us every single day to go back to the wisdom that You have given to us in Your Word. Help us to be honorable sons and daughters who take Your Word seriously and love You and are willing to be obedient. May Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.

Psalm 78 verses 1 to 8 says, "Give ear, O my people, to my teaching; incline your ears to the words of my mouth! I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings from of old, things that we have heard and known, that our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children, but will tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the LORD, and His might, and the wonders that He has done. He established a testimony in Jacob and appointed a law in Israel, which He commanded our fathers to teach to their children, that the next generation might know them, the children yet unborn, and arise and tell them to their children, so that they should set their hope in God and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments; and that they should not be like their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation, a generation whose heart was not steadfast, whose spirit was not faithful to God."

There is no greater need in our world today than for Christian parents, especially fathers, to bring their children up in the discipline and the instruction of the Lord. Bible schools and youth ministers have great value, but God gave parents the responsibility of spiritually training their children.

God's grace and love are abundant, and the joys of serving the Lord are without end. That means we must get right and remain right with the Lord, if we wish to live with Him throughout eternity. To get right with God, place your trust in the Lord Jesus, repent and turn from sin and come to the Lord's way, confess Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and be baptized into Christ for the forgiveness of your sins—just as Acts 2:38 teaches. Won't you do that today?

Well we hope that today's study about passing on the faith has stirred you to consider not only your soul but the souls of your children. If you live in the United States and want a free printed copy or a CD of this message, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to [searchtv@searchtv.org](mailto:searchtv@searchtv.org). Or, you can call the Search office toll-free at 1-800-321-8633. Now you can download these lessons or a newsletter online at our website: [www.searchtv.org](http://www.searchtv.org). You can also watch SEARCH anytime on YouTube! We ask that you subscribe to our channel, "SearchTVMinistry." There's also a schedule of our programs and a map with the location of churches of Christ in your area. We also offer free Bible Correspondence courses. Now don't worry, we're not here to get your money or to exploit you. We're here to help you to come to know the Lord and to get to heaven.

Please get involved with a church of Christ in your area. And if you're looking for a healthy, Biblical church home, we'll be happy to help you find one. We'll as always we say to you we'll be back next week, Lord willing. So we ask that you keep searching your bibles, keep searching God's Word with us and tell a friend about this program. Let them know that you watch it and that you're gaining something from it and encourage them watch too. And as always we say to you God bless you and we love you from all of us at In Search of the Lord's Way.