

Information and Reminders—

Pray for: Janice White, The Ledgerwoods, Samuel Southall, and others with ongoing health battles or other trials, our brethren who are travelling, and new Christians whom Satan will certainly attack (Matt. 13:20-23).

The men meet on the first Sunday of the month to discuss our work and duties. There is a sign-up sheet at the back for items needing their attention.

Simple opportunities to teach the lost and assist each other.

- Can you post Scriptures on our signboard during Oct, Nov, or Dec? Sign up!
- Prepare for our fall meeting with Wayne Goff-- **September 22-27**.
- Future gospel meetings: Brett Hogland (Spring 2014), Ron Halbrook (Fall 2014), Donnie Rader (Spring 2015), Jimmy Stevens (Fall 2015).

We assemble each Sunday at 10AM, 10:45AM, 5PM & Wednesday at 7PM

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The Exhorter

Acts 11:23 *Exhorted them all... cleave unto the Lord*

Church of Christ--Quail Valley

September 15, 2013

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HOW CAN I MAKE MY CHILD LOVE GOD?

David Osteen

“How Can I Make My Child Love God?” It’s the one question every responsible parent wants to know the answer to, and it’s very simple, “You can’t”. You can’t make anyone love anything or anyone. That’s what is so unique about love; it is completely an expression of free will. Now that being said, you can influence someone to love. You can provide the environment for it (sometimes perfectly so), just as God has done with us.(I Jn 4:19) And so you then may ask, “How Can I Influence My Child to Love God?” Now, we are on to something.

There are two things I find tragic about this question though: 1) Most of the time parents really already know the answer, and 2) They ask this question most often, when it’s already “too late” – when their kids are already grown and gone. Consider the first tragedy though. Most parents already know the way to influence a child to love God – they just choose not to accept that “way”.(Pro. 22:6) Like the young college student who *knows* what he needs to do to pass the physics exam, but would rather spend 30 hours researching a smart pill to automatically know all the answers than 30 hours of studying to learn them. Or like the college kid at the end of the semester after he’s already failed all his classes that begins to ask himself how he can pass them, are the parents who wait till their kids are grown and gone to start asking “How can I influence my kid(s) to love God?” (Pro 19:18) Let’s ask the question while we have the *most* time for interaction in their lives, and have the will to do what we know by God’s truth is right. (Jn. 13:17)

So, how can you influence your child to love God? I am quite amazed at the number of kids walking around wearing college paraphernalia like UT sweatshirts or A&M caps. Not “college kids” mind you, but 15, 10, or even 5 year olds. *Babies* even, wearing college paraphernalia. You can go on YouTube and find 6 or 7 year old kids that cry, *literal* tears of *genuine* sorrow, that a college team lost a basketball or football game. Kids that have never been to the colleges, and barely even know

what college is, or for, and yet they have this deep, sincere, and true devotion, adoration, and love for these universities! It is mindboggling isn't it?!?! Where did a 5 year old learn to love a university; was it nature... or nurture? Nurture is the obvious answer isn't it? These kids weren't born loving one university over another, or loving a university at all! They were nurtured, usually by their parent(s), to love a particular university and all of its extracurricular sports. If parents can so easily and effectively influence kids to love a university; shouldn't they be able to influence their kids to love God, and His church?

We all know the answer is yes; but how? How do parents get their kids to love universities, or sports, or other hobbies? The answer is so simple it'll make you want to tear the hair out of your head. 1) The parents demonstrate deep, sincere, and true devotion, adoration, and love for these things themselves, and that's picked up on by their children (this is called example); and 2) they also, "...talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down and when you rise up." (Dt. 6:7) But it doesn't stop there. Those parents also "...write them on the door posts of your house and gates." (Dt. 6:9) (This is called proactive teaching). These are essentially the only two tools a parent needs to get their kids interested in something. Let's break the two down and look at them a little closer.

First, the parents demonstrate deep, sincere, and true devotion, adoration, and love for these things themselves. Kids can oftentimes see through fake love and adoration. Kids are always watching and listening to their parents (I know it may not always seem that way, but they are). Parents joyously get ready and go to church. Parents are excited to teach a class or go to a gospel meeting or go to a gospel singing. Parents are amongst the first to get to church, or the last to leave, or BOTH! Parents are reading and studying their bibles at home. Parents are having biblical/spiritual conversations in front of their kids. God, and His church, are *never* a burden, *never* a nuisance, and always ALWAYS ALWAYS a priority. (Mt. 6:33) If a kid was asked if their parents loved God, the kid would not only be able to tell you yes, but give ample examples of why they say yes. If kids see that going to church and loving God is just an obligation in a parent's life, and not a jubilation, then the truth is, you simply will not influence your kids positively to love God. So when it comes to teaching your kids to love God, look to yourself FIRST!

Second, is that parents that teach their kids to love a college, are always wearing the school pride "on their sleeve"; quite literally in many respects. They are not shy about their alma mater or other school they adore. They wear hats and shirts and coats with logos emblazoned on them. They have decorations inside and outside their

rooms, homes, cars, workplace etc. The school fight song is the ringtone on their cell phone. They will talk to anyone about their college. The children are indoctrinated from the time they can smile, to love this particular school. The parents are always talking about the value of the school, its greatness, its importance. Not just once, but every other day of the child's existence. Does this not parallel the principle of God's teaching in Deut. 6:1-9??? If you want your kids to love God and His church, then they have to be more than a Sunday field trip and mid week afterthought. We need to be teaching, training, and disciplining our kids daily; talking about God, and His will, day in and day out. That's not just how you teach your kid's *about* God, it is how they learn to love Him!

"Yeah, but I don't want to do that. Aren't there some other ways?" Do you know what you are saying when you say that? You are really saying "I don't want my kid to go to heaven." Now that might seem harsh, but it is not. It is just the hard reality. Granted, your kid still has a chance. They may find God through their own studies, or through meeting someone else, or their spouse later on in life etc. But what you are saying is "I don't want my kid's to go to heaven based on *my* influence." Are you crazy? The greatest love you can give your child... is to teach them to love God. Now that you know how; what are you waiting for?

[Grace Gazette 2-5-12 Texas City (Tx) Church of Christ]

"Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for ministry" (2 Tim. 4:11). Have you ever stopped to consider what this says about both Mark and Paul?

Mark had once deeply disappointed Paul (Acts 13:13; 15:36-41), but that was not the end of the story for Mark. He didn't allow his mistake in Acts 13, or Paul's criticism to keep him from becoming a worker one could count on. We will all make mistakes and disappoint others, but it doesn't have to become a pattern--we can change.

But what about Paul's character? Too often, when someone has really let us down, we form a life-long prejudice that never allows us to see the true changes they have made. Paul may or may not have been too stern in Acts 15, but one thing is clear--he kept an open mind about the character of Mark and came to consider him a valuable worker in the kingdom.

May God help us all to overcome our past and see the same effort in others.

John R. Gibson

www.pepperroadchurch.org/resources/articles/2013/05/22/brief-thoughts-5-22-2013