

SPIRITUAL INSIGHT FOR YOUR LIFE

FAITH *for life*

“The **life** which I now live...I live by the **faith** of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.” Galatians 2:20

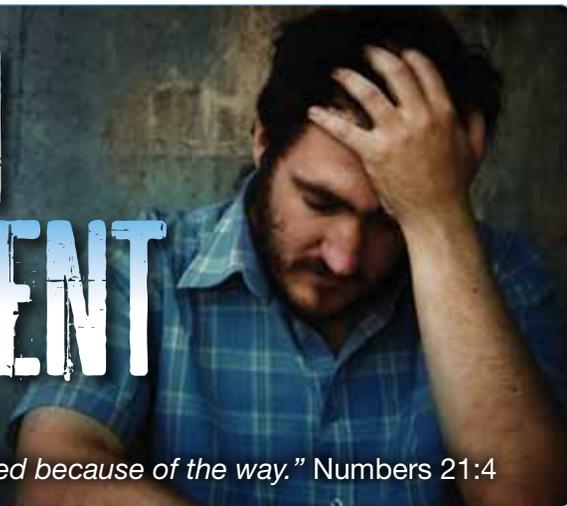
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DEALING WITH DISCOURAGEMENT

by pastor tony scheving

“And the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way.” Numbers 21:4



LIFE CAN BE DISCOURAGING as well as exhausting. Maybe you're currently struggling with job problems, marital problems, kid problems, car problems, housing problems, health problems, or financial problems. Maybe someone has 'let you down' and caused real disappointment. Maybe you've grown tired of the 'day-in and day-out' grind of things. Perhaps it seems like the faster you go, the further behind you get, and you feel like you'll never catch up. But sometimes discouragement hits us for no apparent reason. It's like a cloud that just hangs over your head. Whatever the reason is, you can find yourself sad, frustrated and disheartened. It can happen to anybody.

In 1 Kings 18 and 19 of the Bible, we find Elijah, one of the greatest men in the scriptures. In fact he's one of only two men to ever go to heaven without dying. He does many incredible miracles and finally goes on to heaven in a whirlwind. Elijah even makes a cameo appearance in the

New Testament hundreds of years later and speaks personally with Jesus (Mark 9:4). To look at Elijah, you would think that nothing would discourage him. He appears 'bulletproof' and full of faith! And yet, in 1 Kings 19:4, Elijah “went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life.” He said, “Lord I've had enough, get me out of here!”

You might say, “Pastor, what led up to this?” Ironically, it was nothing that would typically cause discouragement. Here's Elijah and he is in the desert for 3½ years, and by faith God is feeding him using a raven. Finally it's 'show-time' and God calls Elijah to the top of Mount Carmel for a contest with the 450 false

prophets of Baal. “And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt (hesitate) ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word” (1 Ki 18:21). The contest began and each party (Elijah versus the 450 prophets of Baal) proceeded to build an altar and put a sacrificial animal on it. Then the false prophets of Baal cried out for their 'fire-god' Baal to send fire down from the sky to consume the offering, but hours passed and nothing happened. Then Elijah took over, prayed a simple prayer to God who sent a fire down from the sky, consuming the sacrifice, the wood, and the rocks as well as the altar! The false prophets are put to death by the people, and a spiritual revival breaks out. Elijah becomes a household name, but Queen Jezebel now threatens to kill him. Ironically, Elijah could have called down fire on her head, but after standing up to 450 wicked men in faith, he backs down from one woman and runs for his life in discouragement. What a mood swing! Imagine Elijah, the guy who

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does incredible miracles, reappears in the New Testament with Jesus, and will yet reappear during the coming tribulation period (Rev 11:3), but now he is totally discouraged and suicidal. Well, the fact of the matter is, Elijah was as human as you and me, and was prone to discouragement just like we are.

As you look through the pages of the Bible, you find the 'greatest of the greats' and they are still prone and susceptible to this thing that we call 'discouragement'. Elijah is one of many in the scriptures who struggled with discouragement. In Job 3, we find another outstanding man who cried out in discouragement. He is down in the dumps and 'singing the blues'. His name is Job and he has just lost his 10 children in an accident, as well as his own health and personal fortune. That would discourage anybody. In Job 3:9, the Bible says, "After this opened Job his mouth, and cursed his day (the day he was born)." Can you imagine his despair?

Over in the New Testament we find the great apostle Paul discouraged. He was nearing the end of his long and incredible ministry. Paul had been faithful to God through shipwrecks, stonings, beatings, imprisonment, and ongoing heartaches. He was continually on the run and surrounded by people. Sometimes being continually busy can get discouraging. You try to keep going like the Energizer Bunny, and it tends to wear you down. Whatever the reason, Paul got weary, and we find places in the Bible where Paul needs personal encouragement from the Lord himself (Acts 23), or just goes out and takes a walk alone to clear his head (Acts 20).

Maybe Paul had some plans that backfired or some people who let him down. Whatever the reason, we find that the greatest men in the Bible needed encouragement. I've known people who always appear on the top side who secretly fight discouragement. There was a Midwestern lawyer many years ago, who suffered such deep depression, that his friends and loved ones thought it wise to keep all knives and razors away from him (he was acting suicidal). This man wrote the following in his diary in his time of great despair: "I am now the most miserable man living, and whether I shall ever get better, I cannot tell. I greatly fear that I shall not." Well, he did recover from his discouragement, and went on to become the 16th president of the United States, the beloved Abraham Lincoln.

In the book of Numbers 21, the Jews are in the 'wilderness wandering' and the Bible says, "They journeyed from mount Hor by the way of the Red sea, to compass the land of Edom: and the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way." I don't know what 'the way' was like, but I am pretty sure it was rocky and thorny. I am sure there were brush patches that needed clearing just to pass through. They had this incredible mess on their hands, and said, "We are getting weary." These were people who were muscular and hardened by years of slavery in Egypt, but the way through the wilderness must have been rough because the Bible says, "The soul of the people was much discouraged."

In the book of Nehemiah we find another hopeless situation. The Jews had been in Babylonian captivity for 70 years when they

finally returned back to Jerusalem. Seven decades earlier in 587 BC, the city had been destroyed to rubble by the army of King Nebuchadnezzar. The rebuilders now had a nasty job ahead of them, and they were discouraged. In Nehemiah 4:10, the people said, "The strength

of the bearers of burdens is decayed, and there is much rubbish; so that we are not able to build the wall." They hadn't even started the project yet, and the people were already weary. They also had enemies lurking in the shadows waiting to pounce on them when their guard was down. It was bad news on top of bad news. Have you ever had a difficult endeavor before you? Have you ever had some task, some job that needed to be done and it just looked hopeless?

After the Red River flood of '97, I decided to replace my basement floor, which was heaved by the years of pressure under the slab. After jack-hammering out the concrete, we needed to remove some clay in order to install pea rock and drain tile. We were digging out the clay and carrying it out in 5 gallon buckets. Soon the ground water in the basement began to seep up and turned the clay to mud which stuck to our shovels. It finally got to the point where we could only get the mud out by scooping it up with our hands into the buckets. To put it mildly, the work got a bit discouraging. Today the basement floor looks great, but at the time it was a real mess! Sometimes the path of life can be cumbersome and hard to bear. According to an old fable, there was a time when Satan was holding an auction. He had put on display all of his favorite weapons, but there was one that had a sign on it "Not for sale." Somebody inquired and said, "Why are your other tools for sale but not this one?" Satan said, "This is my favorite weapon. It is called 'discouragement.' I will never sell it." Satan added, "When someone is already discouraged, there are so many other things that I can afflict them with."

Discouragement can be such a lethal thing. During the Boer war of 1899, the city of Ladysmith was in siege. An English civilian was arrested, tried by court-martial and sentenced to a year's imprisonment for being a "discourager." It was a critical time. The fortunes of the town and its brave garrisons were trembling in the balance. Instead of heartening the men on whom the defense depended and making them braver and stronger, he put faintness into their hearts and made them less courageous. The man would go along the picket lines, saying disheartening words to the men on duty. He carried no gun, and never fired a shot,

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Dealing with Discouragement *continued from page 2*

but he struck a huge blow nonetheless as a discourager. He was found guilty of a crime and rightly court-martialed and imprisoned.

There are many things in life that can be discouraging. In Psalm 73, we find David discouraged because the wicked were prospering (have you ever felt that way?). He said, *“As for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped. For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.”* Here is David and he’s trying to do right, he is trying to live for the Lord, but he’s suffering. He is going through one battle after another, but he observes the ungodly and they don’t seem to have any problems. Have you ever wondered why God allows good people to suffer and be discouraged?

Why does God allow seasons of defeat, despondency, and despair? Perhaps it’s because he has a blessing waiting on the other side. In Luke 5, the disciples had spent an entire night fishing and had caught nothing. Incidentally, they weren’t fishing for ‘the sport of it.’ It was their livelihood, and a night of ‘no fish’ hit them in the bank account. Peter would have to give the bad news to his wife and kids. But Jesus showed up and told Peter to cast his nets on the ‘other side of the boat.’ Perhaps Peter thought, “What does this carpenter know about fishing?” But regardless, he followed orders and caught a mess of fish. In the midst of his shock, Peter’s faith in God grew and it was worth the temporary discouragement. Perhaps you and I often face times of discouragement so God can show Himself powerful and reveal what he can do. As a result, when we come out ‘the other side’ our faith is enhanced and we say, “Look what God did!” Why does God allow his people to go through such valleys? He may be trying to increase our faith. Sometimes the discouragement means that the victory is just around the corner. After the Jewish nation came through the awful desert, there were victories and blessings in the Promised Land. Many years ago, there was a Chaplain in Atlanta, Georgia by the name of Parker Tucker. He walked around ‘down in the mouth’ for nearly two weeks with a cloud over his head. One day he walked by a funeral parlor and saw a sign which

read, “Why walk around half-dead when we’ll bury you for \$169.50?” The preacher chuckled over the funeral director’s sense of humor and decided with God’s help to walk through life like a child of God.

God may allow times of discouragement so we don’t begin to take things for granted. The Bible says in Galatians 6:9, *“And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.”* God says, don’t quit and don’t faint, because the sun will shine once again if you hang in there.” In 1 Samuel 30, we find that David receives an awful setback. While David and his men are off to war, a heathen army came and kidnapped all the wives and children, and took everyone’s possessions, burning the city to the ground. When David’s men returned, they all wept bitter tears and in their discouragement even speak of stoning David as their scapegoat. The Bible tells us David was ‘greatly distressed’, but adds, that *“David encouraged himself in the Lord his God.”* David kept going, and everything ended up working out. The Bible says, *“We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose”* (Rom 8:28).

In 1831, Abraham Lincoln tried to go into business for himself but he failed. The following year, in 1832, he ran for the state legislature but was defeated. The following year, he tried starting a business again only to fail. In 1834, he ran for the legislature again and won, but the following year his sweetheart died and he had a nervous breakdown. Two years later, he ran for the Speaker of the House and was defeated. Two years after that he ran for the elector of the House, and was defeated. In 1843, three years later he ran for congress but was defeated. Three years later in 1846, he was elected to the Congress, but in 1848, he ran for

re-election but lost the election. Then in 1855 he ran for the US Senate, but lost. In 1856 he ran for US Vice President, but was soundly beaten. In 1858 he ran for Senate again, but lost. At this point you would think Lincoln was a hopeless ‘industrial strength’ loser, but in 1860 he became our 16th president and the rest is history.

A final example of discouragement in the Bible would be Jesus Christ himself. In Isaiah 53, the Bible tells us that Jesus was *“a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.”* With all the rejection he received, he apparently was no stranger to discouragement. The Bible says, *“He was in all points tempted like as we are”* (Heb 4:15). The Lord was familiar with heartaches and burdens. He had more right to be discouraged than anyone who’s ever lived, yet he went about trying to cheer up others and be an encouragement. Few things will help lighten discouragement like ‘forgetting about ourselves’ and seeking to be a blessing to others. Jesus lived a totally unselfish life and never once thought of himself. Quite often discouragement is the result of focusing all our thoughts inward and ‘counting our problems instead of our blessings’. Jesus made it a point to live for others and it helped to keep him on the top side. He also found continual strength to go on by the grace of God. May God grant us the same grace to overcome discouragement. ■

BIBLE STUDIES
Campus

NDSU
large group
MONDAYS 8:30 P.M.
HIDATSA ROOM
NDSU MEM UNION

small group
THURSDAYS 7:00 P.M.
ROOM OF NATIONS
NDSU MEM UNION

MSUM
large group
MONDAYS 7:00 P.M.
ROOM 203
MSUM CMU

small group
THURSDAYS 8:30 P.M.
ROOM 212
MSUM CMU

Christian
BIBLE FELLOWSHIP
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why evolution will never prevail

BY DANIEL ACEITUNA

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth”
Genesis 1:1

I was reading *The Fargo Forum* sometime back when a certain article caught my attention. The Faith and Worship section featured a report pertaining to the opening of the Creation Science Museum in Louisville, KY. The article’s headline stated, “Museum draws 550,000 visitors for creationism.” It went on to explain how the museum has been drawing a larger amount of people than expected. It also mentioned that “many scientists fear the damaging effects on science education when young people tour the museum.”

There was one quotation, in particular, that caught my attention. The quote was from a Mr. Dan Phelps, head of the Kentucky Paleontology Society. Mr. Phelps said, “We’re depressed. There’s been such a push in recent years to improve science education, but (creationism) stuff like this still hangs

around.” I thought about his statement, and would like to offer advice on addressing his dilemma in the following open letter to Mr. Phelps, and all those who share in his sentiments.

Dear Mr. Phelps,

I recently read your quote in a *Forum* article concerning the Creationism Museum in Kentucky. It expressed frustration over how, “in spite of the efforts to improve science education, stuff like creationism still hangs around.” As a software engineer, with an electrical engineering background, pursuing a PhD, I have had a good share of exposure to the science and technology mindset. As a born again Christian, Bible college graduate, and faculty member at a local Bible college, I have also had a good share of exposure to the creationist mindset. Therefore, having been exposed to both sides of the fence, I’d like to offer you advice on “how to finally, and permanently, displace creationism and get evolution so well entrenched in society’s mind” that no one would waste their time going to that creationist museum again.

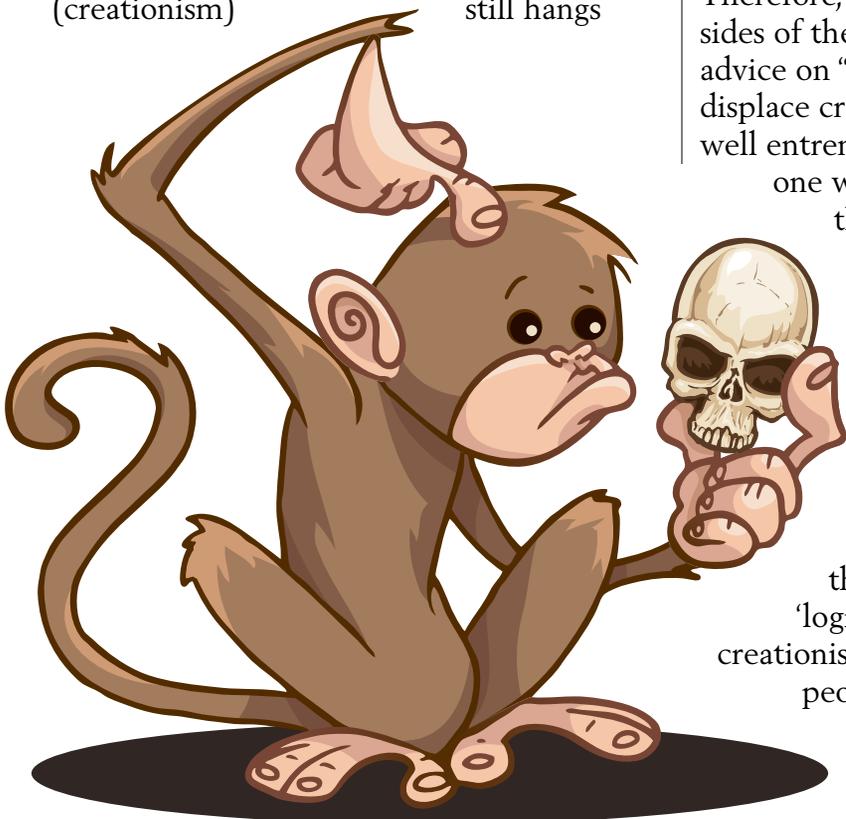
I begin by addressing what seems to be the science community’s underlying assumption. Namely, that the reason people embrace creationism, is out of ignorance to the “fact that science has found answers to the origins question.” Thus, the ‘logical assumption’ is that belief in creationism is a continuing example of people, ignorant of science, searching for answers. In particular, answers to: Where did we

come from? How did we get here? The assumption is that with enough science education, there should not be a need for creationism. This is how my science mindset sees the issue from your side.

But the fact is, as a born-again Christian, I don’t seek after God in order to find answers to questions that science can already answer. Nor do other Christians I know. I am not the only engineer in my church. Our membership includes doctors, architects, PhD’s, realtors and pharmacists, to name a few. The reason creationism doesn’t go away in spite of improvement in science education is because people are seeking for the “God of purpose.” People want meaning to their lives; a reason for existing. The real burning question is not “How did we get here?” but rather “Why are we here?”

So my advice is this: when you teach evolution, emphasize the “sense of purpose that evolution gives a person.” Emphasize how evolution answers why they are here. I realize that you feel it answers that already, but do you really believe that people are satisfied with, “You exist because natural selection worked in your favor?” People realize in their hearts that they will be dead a lot longer than they will be alive; they want to know what follows this shorter period of time. Science can’t answer that beyond, “You cease to exist when the neurons stop firing.” Something inside all of us says, “That explanation is not good enough.”

And there lies the reason why, as you put it, “There’s been such a push in recent years to improve science education, but stuff like this (creationism) still hangs around.” It’s because science is good at trying to explain some of the “hows,” but people really want to know the “whys.” Stuff like creationism will always hang around, until science can start giving people a true meaningful reason why they exist. Creationism inherently implies there is a reason for our existence because it points to a ‘mindful’ Creator and Designer. Evolution implies mindlessness to our existence, which translates to no reason for being here; just eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we shall die. Thus, in a nutshell, if you can ever demonstrate that evolution satisfies the thirst for purpose, then you’ll watch that museum close down for lack of visitors. ■





HOW IS YOUR LOVE LIFE?

BY PAUL CHAPPELL

“AND NOW ABIDETH FAITH, HOPE, CHARITY, THESE THREE; BUT THE GREATEST OF THESE IS CHARITY.” 1 CORINTHIANS 13:13

A love for God cannot be kept on the inside without being shown on the outside.

Major Sullivan Ballou was a soldier in the Union army during the Civil War. He saw many battles and helped the Union secure several victories before he was fatally wounded in the first battle of Bull Run. But a week before he died, Major Ballou wrote the following letter to his wife Sarah: “Sarah, my love for you is deathless. It seems to bind me with many cables that nothing but Omnipotence can break. And yet my love of country comes over me like a strong wind and bears me irresistibly with all those chains to the battlefield. The memories of all those blissful moments I have enjoyed with you come crowding over me, and I feel most grateful to God and you that I have

enjoyed them for so long. And how hard it is for me to give them up and burn to ashes the future years, when God willing, we might have loved and lived together, and watched our boys grow up around us to honorable manhood. If I do not return my dear Sarah, never forget how much I loved you, nor that when my last breath escapes me on the battlefield it will whisper your name.”

Major Ballou had two great loves—his wife and his country. As Christians we should be compelled by two different yet overwhelming loves—love of God and love of others.

Our love for God cannot compare to any other love we have. God, unlike anyone else, gave His only Son so that we might be free from the penalty of sin. I don’t know about you, but every time I think of Christ suffering on the cross for me, I am

overwhelmed with eternal gratitude and love for the Lord.

So many times people say they love God, but rarely do they show it. A love for God cannot be kept inside without being shown on the outside. True love for God changes the way a person thinks, talks, acts, and lives their life, and it is often shown in a love for others. How many times have you seen someone who is completely in love with God and is serving Him neglect others and display a hateful attitude to those around them? Those attitudes don’t go together! If someone truly loves God, their love will spill over to others.

Examine your life right now. First of all, do you have a genuine love for God? One way to test your love is to observe your actions. Do you find yourself willingly serving God? How often do you give to God? Do you find yourself constantly talking about what God is doing in your life? When you truly love God, your conversation and actions will be different. Now examine your actions toward others. Do you find yourself giving short, rash answers to others? Do interruptions often annoy or even anger you? Are there some people you feel envy or hatred toward? God desires that you love everyone around you—no matter their position, practices, or past. It is not human nature to love others despite their faults, which is why a love for God is so vital. Once your love for God is right, your love for others will soon follow. Commit today to love God and others more. Renew a spirit of devotion and love to act, speak, and treat others as God would treat them. ■



HOW TO FIND GOD AND REALLY KNOW HIM

GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION

There are three things that you can know for sure...

1) That you are going to Heaven. *"These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life" (I John 5:13).*

2) That your life will be changed when you get saved. *"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (II Corinthians 5:17).*

3) You will never lose your salvation. *"And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." (John 10:28).*

It all revolves around Jesus Christ!

Who is Jesus Christ? John 1:1 says, *"In the beginning was the Word (Jesus), and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."* John 1:3 continues, *"All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made."* Jesus was God in flesh or God the son who created everything.

He came to earth to save us. *"For the son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10).* The first step in going to heaven is to realize we need to be saved from our sin.

How do we get to heaven?... *"Jesus answered and said unto him, verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3).*

There is a difference between a physical birth and a spiritual birth. *"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the spirit is spirit" (John 3:6).*

Why do we need a spiritual birth? Man was originally created a three part being in God's image—a trinity. *"And God said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness: so God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them" (Genesis 1:26).* Man is made up of body, soul, and spirit.

God placed Adam and Eve in the garden. *"And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Genesis 2:16-17).* Man ate of the fruit and though he didn't die that day physically, he died spiritually!

When Adam and Eve had children they were now born spiritually dead as well (no longer in God's 3-part image). Genesis 5:3 says *"And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image; and*

called his name Seth." That is why we must be re-born spiritually.

That is also why we have a sin nature. You don't have to teach a toddler to be selfish, lie, steal things, sass back, fight with siblings, etc...it is also our nature as we grow up.

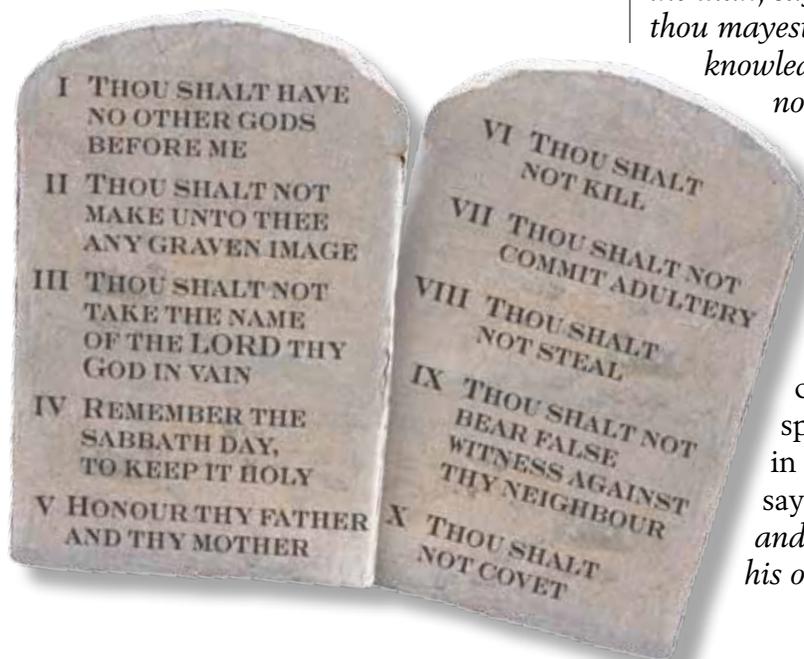
Most people fail to see themselves as serious sinners. They feel they are a "good person." They are comparing themselves to others, instead of God's standard; the 10 Commandments. Let's see how you rate compared to the 10 Commandments.

#1 Thou shalt have no other gods before me (Exodus 20:3) No one can claim they have never put anything ahead of God (money, career, own self centered goals, pleasure, sports, entertainment, sin, vice, a relationship with another, etc).

#2 Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image (of God) (Exodus 20:4) Many have been guilty of inventing a God of their own imagination and liking... a God who 'suits them.' People want a "God that overlooks sin and takes everyone to heaven." They have improvised and dreamed up a God of their own image.

#3 Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain (Exodus 20:7) Re-read that carefully. God is keeping record of every time you've used His name as a curse word and you will answer for it one day.

#4 Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy (Exodus 20:8) Have you always honored the Lord's Day or been faithful in church attendance? (Heb 10:25)



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#5 Honour thy father and thy mother (Exodus 20:12). Have you ever disrespected or disobeyed your parents. Have you ever argued with them or dishonored them?

#6 Thou shalt not kill (Exodus 20:13) Although most people have never committed murder, they are guilty of "murder of the heart." Jesus clarifies this commandment in Matthew 5:21-2; Whosoever shall kill, shall be in danger of the judgment: But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother... shall be in danger of hell fire. Have you ever been mad or bitter at someone?

#7 Thou shalt not commit adultery (Exodus 20:14) While many have never committed adultery, Jesus said; Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart (Matt 5:27-8). Have you ever lusted after the opposite sex? This is adultery of the heart according to Jesus.

#8 Thou shalt not steal (Exodus 20:15) Who could claim they've never taken anything that doesn't belong to them? ... something small or even the boss's time?

#9 Thou shalt not bear false witness (Exodus 20:16) No one could honestly claim they have never told a lie!

#10 Thou shalt not covet (Exodus 20:17) Have you ever desired anything you didn't have or didn't need? Have you ever been discontented, jealous or ungrateful? This is covetousness.

Most people are guilty of breaking all 10 commandments! Many places in the Bible reveal that liars, adulterers, thieves, the covetous, etc will spend eternity in hell! (Rev 21:8, I Cor 6:9-10, Gal 5:19-21). How could you ever expect to get to heaven by "living a good life?"

Romans 3:10 *As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:*

Romans 3:23 *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;*

Sin has a penalty... Romans 6:23 *"For the wages of sin is death" (hell).*

We cannot possibly get to heaven by keeping the law (10 Commandments).

The 10 Commandments were given by God to show us how impossible it is to be saved by doing good works. *"Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith"* (Galatians 3:24). The law (10 commandments) shows us that we are condemned and need a Savior.

You will never get to heaven by doing good works. Titus 3:5 says, *"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us."* *"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ"* (Romans 5:1).

Yet getting to heaven is not automatic just because Jesus died for your sins! Salvation is a gift that must be received. *"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God"* (Ephesians 2:8). That means that baptism has nothing to do with being saved. Romans 6:23 explains, *"The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."*

How does a person know when they are ready to be born again? They know they are ready when they mean business with God, and are willing to repent of sin. Acts 3:19 says, *"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out."* II Peter 3:9 says the Lord is *"not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."* Jesus said, *"except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish"* (Luke 13:5). That means being willing to also turn from false religion or false teaching—anything contrary to the word of God, the Bible.

To repent means to change your mind about your sin, and make Christ the Lord of your life. Are you willing to turn from your sin and turn to God? Do you believe that Jesus paid the full price on the cross for your sins?

Though God hates sin, he loves you and sent Jesus to die for your sins. *"But God commendeth (proved) his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us"* (Romans 5:8).

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

If God is dealing with you about your need of forgiveness, and you would like to

be saved (born again), the final step is to ask God for the gift through a simple prayer. *"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved"* (Romans 10:13). Notice the promise of this verse from a God who cannot lie. Titus 1:2 says, *"God...cannot lie"*. Do you believe that God will save you simply because He said He would? Christ will save you if you are willing to make him the Lord of your life.

If you know that you are ready, you can pray and ask God to save you in your own words such as: "Dear Heavenly Father, I know that I am a condemned sinner unable to save myself, but I am willing to turn from my sins and make Jesus my Lord and master. I now trust in His sacrifice on the cross to pay for my sins. Please forgive me and save me. Amen." ■

NOTABLE QUOTES

"The worst sin toward our fellow creatures is not to hate them, but to be indifferent to them."
— George Bernard Shaw

"Fewer men survive the test of prosperity than the pressure of poverty"
— Quick Quotes for Church Bulletins

"Anyone who has never made a mistake has never tried anything."
— Albert Einstein

"I resolve never to do anything which I would be afraid to do if it were the last hour of my life."
— Jonathan Edwards

"The liberty enjoyed by the people of these states of worshiping Almighty God agreeably to their conscience, is not only among the choicest of their blessings, but also of their rights."
— George Washington

"No army can withstand the strength of an idea when its time is come."
— Victor Hugo

Science & Archeology: DO THEY LINE UP WITH THE BIBLE?



As science and archeology make advances, they seem to continually be catching up with the Bible. In 1492, when Columbus and his crew sailed to the new world, many still thought they would fall off the edge of a flat earth. What most people don't realize is the fact that the Bible recorded 2000 years earlier (700 BC) that the world was round!

Isaiah 40:22 says, *"It is He (God) that sitteth upon the circle of the earth."* Ancient scientists and philosophers also had differing versions on what supported the globe. Some thought we were riding on the back of a giant man, or a giant turtle. The Bible said thousands of years earlier, *"He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing"* (Job 26:7). That same Bible verse likewise makes reference to the "black hole" in the north. There was also a time when many people thought the moon gave off its own light, but God revealed the truth in Job 25:5 (*"Behold even to the moon, and it shineth not"*). Millenniums ago, the Bible also made reference to how evaporation, sea currents, and wind circuits work. The Bible also tells us that God made the human body from the ground (Gen 2:7). Today we know that the human body is primarily made of the same elements as dirt (no wonder we get a "ring around the collar"). In 1799, a sickly George Washington died from an erroneous medical procedure known as "bloodletting." Ironically, on the table next to his deathbed was a Bible which read, *"For the life of the flesh is in the blood"* (Lev 17:11). If only George's doctors had known. Scientifically, there are many things we could look at to prove the credibility of the Bible.

Then there is archeology. Prestigious institutions such as the British museum of London contain numerous artifacts to substantiate even the earliest pages of the

Bible. Then there are the remains of the Tower of Babel in modern day Iraq with a base 400' square, rising to a height of 100' where construction ceased abruptly when God confused

the languages of the people. There is also great evidence that the ancient tomb of Joseph (who was sold into slavery and later saved his people from a famine) has been discovered in the land of Egypt as the Bible mentions. There is also much speculation on the discovery of the petrified remains of Noah's ark. There was also an amazing discovery made in 1998 by archeologist Dr. Ron Wyatt. He found gold-spoked chariot wheels at the bottom of the Red Sea at the only logical crossing point, dating back to the exact time of the crossing made by the Jews.

The Bible says, *"The LORD ...troubled the host of the Egyptians, and took off their chariot wheels"* (Exodus 14:24). There are other numerous findings such as the residence of Abraham, the palace of King David, the horse stables of King Solomon, and of course the Dead Sea Scrolls. For many years, skeptics mocked the Bible because it mentioned ancient civilizations such as the

Philistines and Hittites while no archeological discoveries had ever been found of such people. As time passed, the Bible was once again proven right when many discoveries were finally made of both the Philistines and Hittites. Finally, for many years there was a discrepancy between the Bible account of the fall of ancient Babylon (Daniel 5) and the findings of many archeologists. The Bible claims that Belshazzar was the last king of Babylon while the earlier findings of the archeologist show no record of such a person. They point to Nabonidus as the final king of Babylon. However, more recent discoveries reveal that Belshazzar was the son of Nabonidus and co-regent over Babylon with his father. He was indeed the one in charge that fateful night when the empire of Babylon fell to the Medo-Persian army. Once again, archeology was a "Johnny-come-lately" and the Bible proven as true all along.

There are many other things we could point to which add credibility to the Bible, but most of all we should remember the following: God honors the Bible above His own name (Psalms 138:2), Jesus continually quoted it while on the earth, it is the final source of truth and doctrine (II Timothy 3:16-17), Jesus said we would be judged out of the Bible on Judgment Day (John 12:48), and finally, the Bible has predicted hundreds of events and always been right with 100% pinpoint accuracy. Remember, you don't critique the Bible with science and archeology, but you critique science and archeology with the Bible! ■

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How Important is the Bible? (Pt. 2)

The Bible is essential in finding God our Creator (Rom 10:17). Therefore, it's important that people have a confidence in God's Word. How do we know the Bible is credible? At the time it was written, one third of the Bible was prophetic (in other words, it predicted what would happen in the future). Jeane Dixon was a so-called 20th century psychic who often tried to predict the future. She became world famous by predicting the assassination of President Kennedy, but ironically was still wrong on her predictions over half of the time (anyone could do better than that by flipping a coin). Yet, God's Word has predicted the future correctly 100% of the time with pin-point accuracy (due to the Author who knows the future).

God started the Jewish race 3500 years ago and promised to preserve it for all time. While many other races and civilizations have been eliminated, the Jews have survived all the persecution of Babylon, Greece, Rome, Hitler, etc. God predicted the Jews would go into a 70-year captivity beginning in 606 BC (Jer 29:10). In Isaiah 44:28, God mentioned a King by the name of Cyrus, and predicted that he would free the Jews from this captivity one hundred years before Cyrus was even born! God drove the Jews from their land in 70AD for nearly 1900 years. In May of 1948, the Jews returned in a fulfillment of prophecy. In Ezekiel 12:25, God says, *"For I am the LORD: I will speak, and the word that I shall speak shall come to pass."*

In Matthew 24:3, the Apostles asked Jesus, *"What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?"* Jesus replied

with several things. First of all He said, *"Men's hearts (shall be) failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth"* (Luke 21:26). Due to stress and tension, heart disease and heart attacks, are the leading killers (over cancer, strokes, accidents, etc), costing Americans \$260 billion/year. Secondly, Jesus said that the end of history would be a time of *"famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers (multiple) places"* (Matt 24:6-7). While there were only 35 natural disasters reported in 1960, there were 150 disasters in 1980, 300 in 1990 and over 500 in 2007. Even a casual observer will notice "there's something going on." During a 1400 year period from 500-1900AD, there were only 21 major earthquakes. During the following 83 years from just 1900 to 1983, there have been 52 major earthquakes. Since 1983, there have averaged 40 major earthquakes every

year! Years ago, the Holiday Inn hotel chain had planned to erect a hotel on the Mount of Olives on the east side of Jerusalem. It sent a group of engineers to prepare for the erection. After some investigation, they said it could not be done. They found a geological fault line under the Mount which is causing it to split. The Bible mentioned this fact over 2500 years ago in Zechariah 14:4.

Jesus also mentioned famines. According to a recent report by the BBC, the world's population will double in the next 38 years which will obviously affect the food supply. Jesus also mentioned pestilence which seems to continually be in the news relative to problems with bees, ants, bats, AIDs, etc. The Bible also mentions that lifestyles will become very hectic in the end times. People will be able to travel like never before. Daniel 12:4 mentions, *"The time of the end (when) many shall run to and fro."* Back during the "Little House on

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I Have a Question

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the Prairie” days, many people were born, lived and died in the same county. Today, it’s possible to have breakfast in Mexico City, lunch in New York, and supper in Paris. The Bible also mentions that in the last days “knowledge shall be increased” (Dan 12:4). If technological advances were measured in inches, the inventions discovered from the time of Adam up until the year 1800 would measure about one inch. It would only take another 100 years from 1800 to 1900 to equal another inch of technological advancement, doubling the previous amount from the beginning of time. But if you were to measure the explosion of technology since the year 1900, it would be as tall as the Washington Monument (555 feet)!

The Bible predicts things that would have been impossible without the invention of satellite transmission (Rev 11:8-9). The Bible also describes nuclear fallout (II Peter 3:10-12 & Zech 14:12). Jesus also mentioned that the sexual morals of people (as well as alcohol consumption) would be just like it was before the flood of Noah (Matt 24:37). What was it like just before the flood? The Bible says, “And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth... and that every imagination of the thoughts of (man’s) heart was only evil continually,” (Gen 6:5,

12). The Bible foretells of a one-world government (Rev 13:7, 16), a one-world ruler (Dan 8, II Thes 2, Rev 6, 13), a one-world religion (Rev 17), and a one-world economic system. We see this taking place before our eyes with the UN, NATO, the European Union, G20, etc. Just last month the UN strongly suggested that the world should go to a one-world currency with the US needing to cooperate. The Bible also implies that the world will eventually go to a cashless system which will require all citizens to receive a mark (chip implant?) containing the data of 666 in order to purchase anything (Rev 13:16-18). Unknown to most is the fact that this number is already found in computer language on most retail items in the form of the UPC symbol (notice the same two long narrow bars at the beginning, middle, and end of the items you purchased from the store...these each represent a six in computer language). Our society will most likely promote the benefits of a cashless system by virtue of ‘how it will eliminate’ the drug traffic, black market, the mafia, all robbery, money laundering, etc. If you think the potential of putting micro chips in people is outrageous, it is already being done.

Jesus also told us that just before he returns there “shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be” (Matt 24:21).

This awful time of chaos is described in the book of the Revelation as a bloodbath

on the earth. Before this takes place, truly born-again Christians will be raptured off the earth. The Bible says, “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up (raptured) together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words” (I Thess 4:16-18).

There are over 1800 Bible verses that speak of Jesus coming again (nearly 6 times as many as the 333 prophecies which foretold His first coming). In the very last Bible promise, Jesus says in Revelation 22:12, “Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me.” There are many other things we could look at considering Bible prophecy, but suffice it to say, “Blessed be the LORD...there hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised” (I Kings 8:5-6). ■

The Bible is the best gift God has given to man. All the good Savior gave to the world was communicated through this book. But for it, we could not know right from wrong.

—Abraham Lincoln



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Pastor's Perspective

PASSING IT ON TO THE NEXT GENERATION

"A good man leaveth an inheritance to his children's children"

—Proverbs 13:22

God put the stars in their places, made the sun 93 million miles away from Earth, and tilted our globe at 23 1/2 degrees, turning it like a rotisserie. He obviously had a plan and design for everything from the human eye, ears, knees, hands and incredible brain which controls it all. That same God also has a plan for the institution of the family, but even a casual glance at society will tell you 'something's gone terribly wrong'.

Many children today live to do 'whatever they feel like doing'. Their self-satisfaction is first and foremost, and they exist to get what they want. They continue to lobby their parents even after being told "No", and are preoccupied with fun. Many children today are unappreciative and complain a lot. They are frequently bored and demand entertainment. They are easily irritated, and when assigned a chore, they roll their eyes, complain, disappear, or do as little as possible. They often make poor decisions and cannot be trusted alone. In a nutshell, they learn to 'live their own lives' at an early age. America is filled with immature, self-gratifying kids, which brings up the question, "What are we passing on to the next generation?"

Most parents think the goal of raising a family is simply 'the happiness of their children'. From the time the child is born, the parents begin to feed the kid's self-centeredness. The kid grows up thinking his happiness is of supreme importance. By the time the child is a teenager, he's like most other self-gratifying teens, and that's why no one notices the problem. But actually, self-absorbed youth is a phenomenon that is unique to the past two generations, and found only in countries like ours. Parents have come to accept it and expect it, but this was never our Creator's plan. A parent's commitment to the kid's 'happiness' (instead of his character) ends up ruining him through indulgence. When the child is grown up, it wrecks his marriage because of his self-centeredness, and also makes him a 'flop at life' in general.

Besides problems at home, kids today are walking through profane landmines, taking their cue from an ungodly society. Pornography abounds within the easy reach of most kids. The average top 40 song speaks of making love with someone who's not your spouse. Television depicts adulterous housewives as something to smirk at (we've come a long ways from Ward and June Cleaver). Many movies are sending the same signal of promiscuity and perverseness. Our kids also have to walk through the landmines of humanism.

Years ago, if a frog turned into a prince, we called it a fairy tale. Our kids today are taught the same principle in evolution as if it's a fact. We've taught them that they basically came from animals, and then we wonder why they turn around and act like them. We live in a calloused country where babies are put to death in their mother's womb. Society is trying to redefine the genders and what constitutes marriage. Today, we have 'throw-away' marriages for those who dare to exchange vows and rings. Since 1970, men and women living together outside of marriage has risen by 600%. All of these factors are like strands in a cable that are strangling the morals out of our children. Satan obviously hates the institution of the family and has it marked for destruction. We are witnessing the 'homicide of the home' on a large scale.

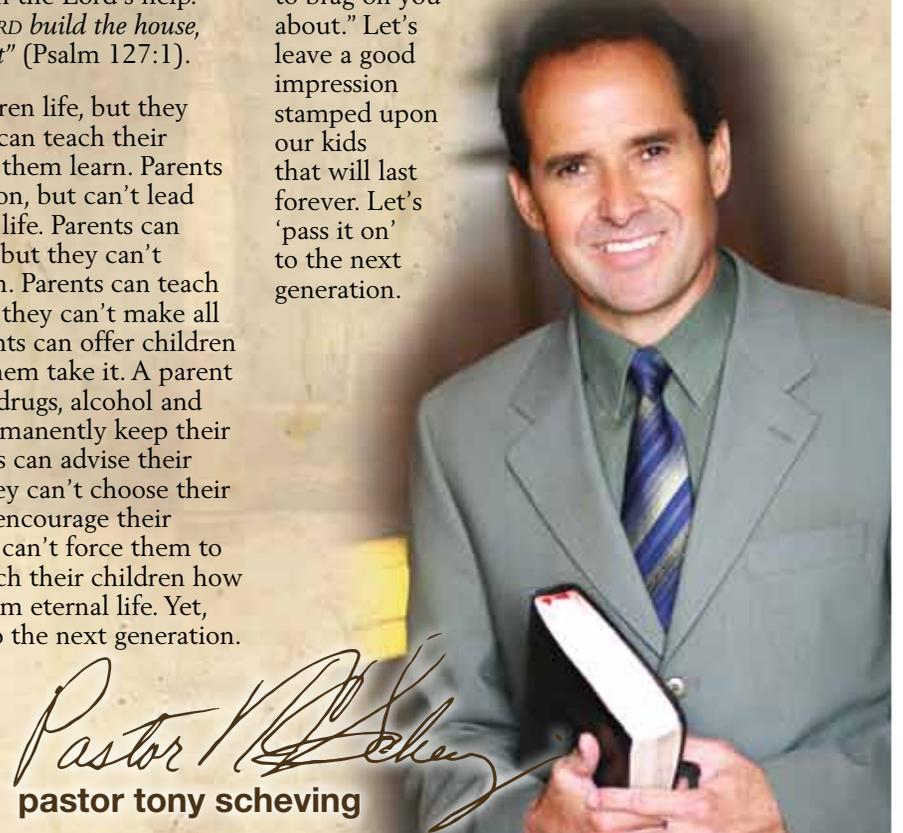
Back in 1976, 16% of all women who had reached age 35 had determined they didn't want to have any children. Incredibly, today that number has nearly doubled. Many in our modern society look at children as a bother. On the other hand, a recent study revealed that nearly 67% of all people consider the greatest pleasure in life is being with their family. These two opposing thoughts tell us that the greatest source of happiness and frustration can both come from the home! The Bible says, "*Children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward*" (Psalm 127:3). Being a successful parent takes resolve and determination. Parenting will 'try you' like few things will. Some days you will feel like a failure. Someone said, "Insanity is hereditary; we get it from our children." Have you ever wondered why God put teenagers and middle-agers together? Someone else said, "The first half of our lives is ruined by our parents. The second half is ruined by our children." Of course these things are said tongue-in-cheek, yet there is a twinge of truth to it in many cases. Our society tells us that it takes a village to raise a child, but in reality, it takes a committed parent with the Lord's help. The Bible says, "*Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it*" (Psalm 127:1).

Parents can give their children life, but they can't live it for them. Parents can teach their children, but they can't make them learn. Parents can give their children direction, but can't lead them throughout their whole life. Parents can take their children to church, but they can't make them listen or have faith. Parents can teach children right and wrong, but they can't make all their decisions for them. Parents can offer children advice, but they can't make them take it. A parent can warn his child about sex, drugs, alcohol and other vices, but they can't permanently keep their child away from them. Parents can advise their children about friends, but they can't choose their friends for them. Parents can encourage their children to set goals, but they can't force them to achieve them. Parents can teach their children how to live, but they can't give them eternal life. Yet, we must pass something on to the next generation.

The Bible says, "*The just man walketh in his integrity: his children are blessed after him*" (Prov 20:7). Parents must ask themselves, "Is God

real in our home?" Kids get their view of God and life primarily at home. When a child doesn't see love, mercy, and grace at home, he will think God is that way. When a child doesn't learn respect at home, he won't show it at school or in public. When a kid receives no discipline for wrong doing, he becomes a law unto himself. In reality, children need a home where the Bible is read, believed, and lived. Our kids could stand to see their parents on their knees in prayer. The most powerful influence in the world is not the US congress or president; it's not NATO, G20 or the UN. The most influential class of people in the world is parents. The hands that rock the cradle still rule the world. While your 'house' is where you reside, your 'home' is the family within the four walls. Many families live in beautiful houses, but have ugly homes.

The prophet said, "*I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth*" (III Jn 1:4). When all else fails, we need to read the directions (the Bible). Biblical guidance can make the difference. Children need direction. The prophet said, "*As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth*" (Ps 127:4). An arrow will fly in the direction it is aimed. We need to point our children in the right direction. We need to teach our kids that life is not about fun, but living for others. The fun comes from being a blessing to others. We need to train our kids to obey, be grateful, work, make wise decisions, and get themselves under control. Most of all we need to point them to the Savior as Lord of their lives. Parents and their children are like runners of a relay race. If you are currently raising kids, then you are now running along side of them for a brief while, trying to exchange the baton without dropping it. When you've completed your race on this earth, what will they say about you when you're gone? Someone well said, "Don't just brag about your ancestors, but leave your kids and grandkids something to brag on you about." Let's leave a good impression stamped upon our kids that will last forever. Let's 'pass it on' to the next generation.



pastor tony scheving