

Your Own Life in Christ and the Spiritual Future of Your Children

Richard Ross, PhD

Introduction

Children and teenagers are influenced by seeing parents in church every Sunday. They are even more influenced when they see that public faith lived out in the privacy of the home.

"Our character, on display at home, is literally constructing our children's framework for understanding who God is. This is happening in a powerful way through whatever takes place daily in our homes."

Rob Rienow

The more spiritually vibrant and alive the parents are, the more this will overflow onto their children.

And the more transparent parents are about their own spiritual journey, the more their children will tend to follow in similar directions.

If you are spiritually alive and growing and have an increasingly warm relationship with your child, the odds are that your child will spend adulthood adoring the majesty of Christ, sharing life with a community of faith, and joining Christ in bringing his kingdom on earth.

If you are spiritually stagnant, the odds are that your child will walk away from the faith after high school.

To evaluate spiritual aliveness vs. stagnation, reflect on questions such as these:

1. Would you say your morning adoration of Christ in prayer and time in Scripture is central to your day?
2. Do you consistently find yourself applying Christ's principles to your vocation, your home life, and your most private life?
3. If you knew Christ were calling you to, would you sell your home, move into a small house in a modest neighborhood, and give all the proceeds to poor people?
4. How often do you share with your child a discovery you have made in your walk with Christ?

If children are to be dazzled with the greatness of God, parents themselves must be dazzled by it.

You Grow as a Disciple of Jesus.

1. Every morning your agenda is "They kingdom come."
2. Every morning you invite Christ to live His powerful life through you.

3. Every morning you continually try to discern the next step in God's plan for your life.
4. Continually ask Christ, "How do I join you in making disciples?"
5. In summary, you be what you pray your children will become.

Let Your Children See Your Heart for Christ

1. Tell how the miracle of salvation came to you.
2. Tell of experiences you have had with Christ since then.
3. Tell what Christ has taught you and revealed to you,
4. Reveal the Depth of Your Love for Jesus through:
Your tone of voice
Sparks in your eyes
5. Read from the Bible—revealing that you highly value it.
6. Invite the Spirit to exhibit His fruit in your life.
7. Imitate and follow Jesus in private and before your children.

Do You Need a Fresh Vision of Jesus?

Children and teenagers today tend to have a "me-centered" faith.
"Little Jesus in my pocket"

"Jesus loves ME and wants ME to go to heaven and have a great life here."

Could the young absorb a "me-centered" faith from parents?

Hebrews 1

1. Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets,

Each prophet provided a part of the revelation of who God is.

2. but in these last days . . .

In the days that Hebrews was written –

on this side of the crucifixion, resurrection, and exaltation

. . he has spoken to us by his Son,

Now we have a final revelation – in the Son.

How people see Jesus is how they see God.

Seeing "Little Jesus" means seeing a "little God."

Seeing "Glorious Jesus" means seeing "glorious God."

. . . whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.

Who created the universe? The Son!

3. He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature,

Either – the Son perfectly reflects the glory of God – like the moon.

Or He IS the radiance of God – as the sun.

Picture Stephen:

Acts 7:55 "Stephen saw the glory of God, namely Jesus, standing at the right hand of God."

. . . and he upholds the universe by the word of his power.

He could think the thought . . .

After making purification for sins,

Christ is the High Priest performing the sacrifice. Later we learn that He is the sacrifice

. . . he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

Skip to Verse 13. And to which of the angels has he ever said, "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet"?

40 days after the resurrection

Mt. of Olives . . .

Right Hand - the place of honor, authority, and power

Jesus NOT on the throne – then parents' priorities cannot be correct

4. having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

The writer of Hebrews had to convince Monotheistic Jewish Christians that Jesus IS God.

Verses 5—14 quoted seven Old Testament passages.

From Deut, 2 Samuel, and Psalms

5. For to which of the angels did God ever say, "You are my Son, today I have begotten you"? Or again, "I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son"?

6. And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, "Let all God's angels worship him."

7. Of the angels he says, "He makes his angels winds, and his ministers a flame of fire."

Remarkable...

8. But of the Son he says, "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of your kingdom."

9. You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions."

10. "You, Lord, laid the foundation of the earth in the beginning, and the heavens are the work of your hands;

11. they will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment,

12. like a robe you will roll them up, like a garment they will be changed. But you are the same, and your years will have no end."

Parents awakened to the greatness of King Jesus
have the greatest potential to rear children awakened to that same greatness.

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