

EVERYDAY LIFE

Monday, October 13, 2008

"The next generation forgot the Lord and what He had done." Judges 2:10 TEV

"Faith is very personal, but not an altogether private matter. Your faith touches others' lives."

My thoughts today are about **"no private matter."**

People have said that faith is private, not something they often share or discuss with others, and certainly not something they would impose on others. But is that even possible? I have heard parents say that they did **not want to impose any particular expression of faith** upon their children when they are small, and would leave it to the children to decide for themselves when they are older. Is that wise?

Would you leave matters of personal hygiene and good health, or proper nutrition, or a suitable education - **or honesty, or modesty, or respect for authority** - for them to decide later, as they wish? It would appear that too many have. There are things that are personal to each individual, but **everything that is personal is not necessarily private**. Faith is one of these. Faith is very personal, but your faith is not altogether a private matter.

Your faith touches other lives, as it should, and when that happens it is no longer private - still personal, but no private matter. It is clear that we have a **culture today that is increasingly secular**. Public expression of faith is labeled intolerance of others and intrusive when not kept private. And there seems to be no alarm at that, even a resignation to that fact. See Jude 1:3.

Today's verse should be sobering to every Christian, and especially to Christian parents. *"As long as Joshua lived, the people served the Lord, and even after his death they continued as long as the leaders were alive who had seen for themselves all the great things that the Lord had done for Israel . . . that whole generation also died, and the next generation forgot the Lord and what He had done."* Judges 2:7/10 TEV.

Christianity is one generation from extinction. The greatest sadness a parent ever could feel is to see their children discount or later discard their parents' values and beliefs. Are you providing your family a Godly example, or granting them an exemption? I would consider myself to have been spiritually negligent if I had not lived in such a way that my family could choose to share my faith.

My parents and grandparents, though dead, still shape my personal faith. Church and home were one and the same - **my faith was born out of Dad's sermons at church and Mom's songs at home, and both their examples at either**. I remember my Dad telling me of my grandmother's miraculous healing from a terminal illness that brought about his conversion, his own healing of rheumatic fever that had left him an invalid when I was a toddler, and of the Lord's faithful provision when there was no food for our table. He would **not have me forget the Lord, and what He had done in our family**.

Your faith is not yours alone; it is a Godly heritage that you pass on to your family, and share with your circle of influence. But how? **Your faith must be personal, truly held, and sincerely lived, and successfully shared with the next generation**. Make its practice and profession honest, and especially consistent. Faith is no private matter; share it with others freely and confidently.

"We will tell the next generation about the glorious deeds of the LORD. We will tell of His power and the mighty miracles He did . . . He commanded our fathers to teach them to their children, so the next generation might know them - so each generation can set its hope anew on God, remembering his glorious miracles and obeying his commands." Psalm 78:4-7 NLT. That is the goal - that each generation may set its hope anew on God, and give that hope to the next!

Begin early to share your faith at home – as a natural part of everyday life, not something for Sundays; as truth that shapes who you are, not a religious activity when convenient. **Faith is not convenient. Truly important things never are.** Make faith, and your living and sharing it, a priority in your home, and elsewhere.

My prayer for you today is: never forget your legacy of faith, and pass it on better than was given.

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