

The Faith of Our Children and Grandchildren

2 Timothy 1:3-5

Introduction:

- A. Timothy's faith first in grandmother and mother.
- B. Our influence on children's and grandchildren's faith probably greater than church's.
- C. Christian parents and grandparents should do two things to influence children's faith.

Discussion:

I. We Should Examine the Quality of Our Own Faith.

- A. The basis of it.
 - 1. Is it scriptural? (3:14-15).
 - 2. Is it too subjective? (Cf. 1 Pet. 3:15).
- B. The sincerity of it. (v. 5 - unfeigned, sincere, genuine).
- C. The dept of it.
 - 1. Too shallow if merely ritualistic, traditional, or emotional.
 - 2. Too shallow if it finds no work to do for the Lord. (Jas. 2:26; 4:17).
 - 3. Too shallow if does not help us with daily life.
 - a. With worries (Matt. 6:30).
 - b. With fears (Matt. 8:26).
 - c. With doubts (Matt. 14:31).
 - 4. Too shallow for concern with children's faith (Eph. 6:4).
- D. The expression of it.
 - 1. Are we too vague?
 - a. Against "sin", "error", and "worldliness" — nothing particular.
 - b. For "scriptural", "truth", "right", "soundness" — nothing particular.
 - 2. Are we too flexible?
 - a. Bend to fit times and circumstances (cf. Gal. 2:14ff; Eph 4:14).
 - b. Bend Bible to fit practice, rather than practice to fit Bible.
 - c. Bend to overly accommodate the immaturity of youth.
 - (1) By not holding responsible for sinful behavior.
 - (2) By melting under pressure of requests and protests.
 - (3) By excusing unacceptable behavior — even giving tacit permission.
 - 3. Are we too rigid?
 - a. No room for patience and forgiveness. (Cf. Matt. 23:23).
 - b. Cannot say "I am sorry" to children when wrong.

II. We Should Combine Bible Teaching with a Good Example.

- A. Example alone will not produce faith..
 - 1. The word must be taught. (Rom. 10:6-8, 14-17; cf. Matt 28:18-20).
 - 2. Many methods of teaching: classes, conversation, literature, etc.
 - 3. Many opportunities for teaching: both at home and at church.
- B. Example may determine the effectiveness of teaching (cf. Matt. 23:3; 1 Pet 3:1)
 - 1. Poor examples undermine our teaching.
 - 2. Good examples reenforce our teaching.

Conclusion:

- A. No guarantees — children and grandchildren free moral agents.
- B. Improve odds greatly with strong faith, sound teaching, proper example.