

# Parents, children and the church

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### Introduction

What can I do to keep my child in the church? This is a question asked by many Christian parents.

Those with small children want formulas to prevent their children from straying from the church, and those with large children, who have distanced themselves from the church, want God to perform a miracle.

What to do?

### Son of a believer needs to be born again

First, every Christian must be aware that 'the children of the flesh are not children of God'. Like? Is my child, born in an evangelical and / or Protestant birthplace, not a child of God?

Now, if 'son of a believer were a son of God', we would have to agree that all of Abraham's descendants are also children

of God, however, this is not what the Bible teaches.

The apostle Paul, writing to Christians in Rome, made it clear that being a descendant of the flesh of Abraham is not what grants divine filiation "Not that the word of God was lacking, because not all who are from Israel are Israelites; Not because they are descendants of Abraham, are they all children" (Rom. 9: 6 -7). "... it is not the children of the flesh who are children of God, but the children of the promise are counted as descendants" (Rom. 9: 8). Now, if the children of Abraham are not children of God, it also follows that the son of a believer is not a child of God.

Therefore, anyone who wants to achieve divine sonship must have the same faith that the believer Abraham had, that is, for a Christian's son to be a child of God, he must necessarily believe in the same way that the father believed the gospel message "Know, then, that those who are of faith are the children of Abraham" (Gal. 3: 7).

Only those who are generated through the incorruptible seed, which is the word of God, are children of God, that is, children of Christians are not necessarily children of God.

## **The Church is the body of Christ**

Second, not all Christians must be aware that the body of Christ, which is also called a church, can be confused with human institutions, such as the family and the church. Being part of a human institution does not make man belong to the body of Christ that is, saved.

# The responsibility to educate

As a member of society, Christian parents need to educate their children, and you should not leave such a charge to the church, or any other institution. Such task is solely and exclusively of the parents. If the parents are absent, this task should be transferred to another person who plays this role: grandparents, uncles, or, as a last resort, an institution established by society (orphanage).

Why can't the mission of raising children be delegated? Because within normality, parents are the people who have the best and greatest trust in the first years of an individual's life. Based on this relationship of trust, the family institution becomes a laboratory where all tests to produce a responsible citizen are carried out.

It is within the family that one learns what is authority and responsibility. Human relationships has learned and developed within the family, such as fraternity, friendship, trust, respect, affection, etc.

As parents have the best and most trusting relationship, they are also the best ones to present the gospel of Christ to children during the educational process. Therefore, it is salutary that parents do not present their children with a vindictive and spiteful God. Phrases like "*Don't do this because daddy doesn't like it! Or, - if you do this, God punishes!* ", Does not reflect the truth of the gospel and causes enormous damage to the child's understanding.

The relationship that the gospel establishes between God and men is guide by trust and faithfulness. Is it possible to trust someone who is spiteful and vindictive? Not! Now, how is it possible for a young man to trust God, if what has been presented to him does not match the truth of the gospel?

Parents need to demonstrate to their children that some

behaviors has not tolerated because the father and mother effectively disapprove. The father and mother effectively prohibit those such attitudes. That such behavior is harmful and the whole society disapproves.

Do not present your child with a resentful, nervous God who is ready to punish you for any misconduct. Such behavior on the part of parents clearly demonstrates that they are evading their responsibility as an educator.

Educating children by establishing a relationship of fear, having God, the church, the pastor, the priest, the devil, hell, the police, black-faced ox, etc., as executioners or punishment, ends up producing men who they do not respect institutions and despise those who exercise authority. This type of education establishes fear instead of respect, as the relationship of trust is not established. When the fear passes, there is no longer any reason to obey.

Parents who act in this way when educating their children do have their share of guilt in misleading their children. The church also has its share, because it failed to appoint parents as the only and legitimate responsible for the education of their children. The state is also guilty, as it assumes the role of educator, when in reality; it is only a vehicle for the transmission of knowledge.

If the foundations of education are not delineate within the family, and such concepts applied and experienced in family relationships, any other human institution, such as the church and the state, will be doomed to failure.

Many parents apply themselves to work, study and the church; however, they do not invest time in their children's education. The education of children takes place full time and it is not healthy to neglect this time.

# When to start educating?

Concern for children usually arises only when Christian parents feel that their children are distancing themselves from the church institution. Fearful appeals to imposition and coercion, forcing children to go to church. Such an attitude is even more mistaken than not having instructed the child at the right time.

These questions startle some Christian parents because they do not know what their role as a member of society is, and what their mission as an ambassador of the gospel. Christian parents cannot mix these two functions.

Christian parents have two very different missions:

- a) to educate their children to be members of society, and;
- b) announce the wonderful promises of the gospel to the children so that they never stray from the faith.

These missions must be carried out from an early age, taking care to deal simultaneously with the education and training of a citizen, without neglecting the teaching of the word of truth, emphasizing the love and faithfulness of God.

From a young age, the child must have been taught to respect the authorities, and it is through the parents that the child will have exercised regarding submission to authority. Through siblings, grandparents and uncles the child will learn respect and conviviality. Like friends, teachers, neighbors and strangers, the child will learn relationships with the world.

What about the gospel? What does the Bible recommend? In Deuteronomy, we read the following: "And you will teach them to your children and speak of them while seated in your house, and walking along the path, and lying down and getting up" (Deut 6: 7). About the way of life the child must be instructed at all times, that is, at home, on the way, at

bedtime and when getting up.

The instruction of the sacred 'letters' is the responsibility of the parents! The scriptures do not recommend delegating such a function to the Sunday school teacher; moreover, it restricts teaching time about Christ to once a week, for a period of just one hour. Very different from what the scripture recommends daily teaching.

## Children and society

Parents need to help children understand that everyone owes obedience to parents and society. Submission to parents today is an essay and an apprenticeship to submission that will be required by society, both at school and at work.

After having been instructed even if the young person did not want to follow the gospel of Christ, will we have a citizen committed to certain social values?

One of the pertinent problems in the education of children of Christians today is in mixing family education with church. Delegating to the church the responsibility of transmitting sociocultural values is a big mistake. When the young person grows up and is disappointed with certain people within the institution, he ends up moving away from the membership of the community he attended, and at the same time, he rebels against all types of social values.

When parents are aware that they do not generate children for God, they apply more to the education and evangelization of children. Nor do they despair when they see that their shoots are not in the mood to go to church. They will not feel guilty or responsible for their children when they do not address some institutional issues.

It is necessary to educate children through teaching the word

of God, however, without forgetting to transmit and inculcate social values. Education includes conversation, play, scolding, warning, etc. Allow children to experience all stages of life, from childhood, adolescence and youth.

However, what to do when children stray from the church? First, it is necessary to distinguish whether children have strayed from the gospel or have distanced themselves from a particular institution.

Ignoring elementary gospel principles leads parents to confuse what it means to be a child of God with belonging to a particular church. If a child is no longer a regular at church, he should not be labeled a stray, or that he is striding to hell, etc.

If a person professes the truth of the gospel as the scriptures say, it means that he is not a stray, but should be alert only to the need to congregate. It may be necessary for parents to investigate why their children are leaving the habit of meeting with other Christians.

Now, if the son does not profess the truth of the gospel and continues to congregate out of habit, his condition before God is troubling. What does he know about the gospel? Does he profess the faith of the gospel? If the answer is negative, it is necessary to announce the truth of the gospel, so that he can believe and be saved, and not just a churchgoer.