

**SERMON: PASSING THE CROSS TO THE NEXT GENERATION
3-1-26**

OPENER:

I want to open with one of the Ten Commandments today:

Exodus 20:4-9 “You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; 5 you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, 6 but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments

(Explain scripture)

In this second commandment, God is telling us what the boundaries of our relationship with Him look like.

We find God describing Himself as jealous. He wants us all to Himself, and doesn't want us putting anyone or anything ahead of Him. Let's talk about why this is, what idolatry is, and why it's a good thing that God is jealous for us.

Let's clarify the difference between envy and jealousy as the two are often used interchangeable. While there is some overlap between the two, though, they are not the same.

> Envy is: wanting what someone else has.

> Jealousy is: wanting to keep what you have all to yourself.

God is saying, *“You shall have no other idols before me.”*

An idol could be a place or a person or even simply an idea.

The reason God made such a big deal about idolatry is first that He does not have a physical form like all the other gods were thought to possess. Yes, He took on human flesh in Jesus, but He didn't have any kind of an attractive form that would tempt us to worship only His image. Because of this, to have an idol of some kind meant the people were worshipping someone or something other than God.

Also, we were created for worship. God made us to have a desire to worship something. Out of our human nature. We are prone to it. And if you are not worshipping or living for God. You will worship and live for something else. You will have an idol. Because all of us worship something.

And He lays out for us what some of the consequences of our idolatry might be.

He says that He will bring *“the consequences of the father’s iniquity on the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate me.”*

That sounds really harsh to our ears. It sounds vindictive. It sounds like God is basically saying, if you put me second, I’m going to punish you for it. Yet that is not at all what He is saying here.

Side Note:

We have to be sure we are not associating emotions with the word “hate” here at the end of v. 5. Love and hate throughout the Old Testament are often about our acceptance or rejection of someone than how we feel about them.

How many generations does a person typically see over the course of his life? Well, if you have grandkids, then three. Yours, your children’s, and your children’s children. If you get lucky enough to enjoy great-grandkids, you’ll see four.

So, what God is saying is that we will have to live with the consequences of our decision to worship something other than God. Sin is never a solo affair. Our kids and grandkids are going to continue to pay for our sin.

But, how long will the benefits of faithfulness be enjoyed? A thousand generations. Three to four versus a thousand. There’s not even a comparison there. He might as well have said that His faithfulness to those who are faithful will last forever. Actually, that basically is what He is saying.

EXAMPLE:

People today are still receiving the benefit of God’s faithful love to Abraham. Out of that faithful love came Jesus. I rest my case.

SECOND OPENER:

Let's get into the message. What do we mean by Passing the Cross To The next Generation?

Let's look at a scripture that is very familiar to us....

Luke 9:23 Then He said to them all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.

Within this scripture is the fullness of the gospel. This is it!

First of all:

We see a command from Jesus himself. That if we want to follow him we must "take up our cross."

The cross:

A symbol of death and sacrifice.

IF YOU AREN'T TAKING UP THE CROSS OF CHRIST THERE IS NO WAY YOU CAN PASS IT ON.

1 Corinthians 9:24: "Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it".

ILLUSTRATION:

runners running and passing the baton.....

What a runner is saying when they pass the baton.....

"Here, here you go. I am finished running the race. Now it's your turn. You run." Go! Run as fast as you can!

my twirling baton skills passed to my granddaughter

What are you passing?

An idol?

What image are you passing? We are image bearers.

SO HOW DO WE PASS THE CROSS TO THE NEXT GENERATION?

TO PASS THE CROSS IS TO PASS THREE THINGS:

1) DEDICATION

- 2) FAITHFULNESS
- 3) SACRIFICE

1.WE TAKE UP DEDICATION

***Deuteronomy 6:4-9 “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one!
5 You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul,
and with all your strength. 6 “And these words which I command you
today shall be in your heart. 7 You shall teach them diligently to your
children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk
by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. 8 You shall bind
them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your
eyes. 9 You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your
gates.***

**The very first thing Jesus said to the disciples... ”follow me”.
Jesus was saying, Go where I go. Do what I do. Let me lead you.
Stick to me.**

dedicated means: committed, totally devoted, loyal

**Where do we show our dedication to God? Where do we show our
dedication to God to our children?**

***..... 6 “And these words which I command you today shall be in your
heart. 7 You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of
them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie
down, and when you rise up. 8 You shall bind them as a sign on your hand,
and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. 9 You shall write them on
the doorposts of your house and on your gates.***

**This command is telling us to teach our children in our daily lives. while we
sit in our house. Where we walk. Before we go to sleep. When we wake
up. In fact we bind God’s word and His ways to our lives. We remember
them every time we come into our house and when we go out of our house.**

**WE CAN HAVE KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST AND NO
COMMITMENT TO HIM.**

**ARE YOU TRAINING YOUR CHILDREN IN HYPOCRISY?
HYPOCRISY IS HAVING THE KNOWLEDGE TO DO GOOD WITHOUT THE
COMMITMENT TO IT.**

NOTE:

The Pharisees knew the scripture. Most of them had been taught since they were young children, They were able to quote many scriptures. The knew prophecy. knowledge of the scriptures.

If we are bringing our children to church to learn about Jesus, but we are not living for Jesus, we are training them to be a hypocrite. They will receive knowledge of Jesus but be trained in daily life to not live out the knowledge they have received.

Knowledge alone births pride.

The Bible says, *knowledge puffs us up.*

That's why *we must be doers of the word and not just hearers only.* There is a danger in receiving the knowledge of the gospel without a commitment to it.

EXAMPLE:

Pharaoh heard the commands of the Lord. He understood what Yahweh was asking him to do, but He refused and his heart was hardened. To hear the Word and not do it hardens our heart.

SIDE NOTE:

BEING DEDICATED IS MORE THAN JUST AGREEMENT

We are tricked into thinking that agreement is obedience. We come and sit in church and agree to everything that is said and shake our head and say, "Amen". But, then we live our daily lives without any commitment to it.

WE TAKE UP DEDICATION - WE PASS DEDICATION!!

2. WE TAKE UP FAITHFULNESS

Jesus said.....*"take up your cross DAILY"*

faithfulness defined is: doing the same thing over and over again.

vs. 7 You shall teach them diligently to your children,

The word translated “*teach*” means “*repeat.*” By using the word repeat God focuses on the method of instruction, not on the instruction itself.

Every teacher knows repetition aids learning. The Master Teacher commands parents to repeat His words to their children, not just daily, but all throughout the day and day after day.

That means that the totality of God’s word is to be the repeated object of conversation with our children when they rise, walk with us, sit with us, and when they go to bed. The problem is where to start.

- > Do you follow through with commitments you make?
- > Are you wishy washy in your commitment to the Lord? Are you committed one week and not the next.
- > When the going gets rough, do you get lax in your servitude to God?

WE TAKE UP FAITHFULNESS - WE PASS FAITHFULNESS.

3. WE PASS SACRIFICE

“DENY YOURSELF”

sacrifice means: giving up something valuable for a greater purpose or relationship with God.

Romans 12: 1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service

- > Do your children witness you making sacrifices for the kingdom of God?
- > Do they witness your generosity?
- > Do your children see you give to the Kingdom?
- > Do you sacrifice your time, your talents and your treasures for God?

- > Would your life be described as a life of sacrifice?
- > Are you willing to give up things of value in this life to have assurance of eternal life in the next?
- > Do you lay down your life for your family?
- > Are you denying yourself so you can pass the cross to the next generation?

WE TAKE UP SACRIFICE - WE PASS SACRIFICE.