

RAISING UP THE NEXT GENERATION FOR THE CHURCH LIFE

Message One

Sanctifying Ourselves For the Sake of the Children

Scripture Reading: John 17:19; 4:6-7, 27; Eph. 5:26-27; Num. 6:3-4;
1 Thes. 5:23; 4:4; Judg. 13:12-14

I. Although the Son is absolutely holy in Himself, He still sanctified Himself in His way of living while He was on earth in order to set an example of sanctification for His disciples—John 17:19; Eph. 5:26-27:

- A. There were many things that He could have done which were not contrary to His own holiness; nevertheless, He refrained from doing them because of weakness in the disciples—John 17:19.
- B. In many matters the disciples' weakness directed the Lord and restricted His freedom; the Lord could do many things, but He did not do them because He did not want the disciples to misunderstand or be stumbled—4:6-7, 27.
- C. In order for us to be holy, we first need to be separated unto God positionally—Matt. 23:17:
 - 1. With respect to our family, neighbors, colleagues, and friends, we need to be separated; many Christians, however, are saved, but not separated—Titus 2:14; cf. Neh. 13:23-24, 30.
 - 2. Once a person is saved, he should also be separated; this is the reason a believer is called a saint; to be holy is to be separated unto God—Rom. 1:2, footnote 3.

II. Those who have children should sanctify themselves for the sake of their children; this means that we should refrain from doing many things which we could do, for the sake of our children—John 17:17, 19; Num. 6:1-12:

- A. Many strong believers would be raised up in our second generation if all the parents of this generation would be good parents; the future of the church depends on the parents—cf. 2 Thes. 3:9; Phil. 3:17.
- B. A Nazarite had to abstain from wine and anything related to its source, signifying that we must abstain from all kinds of earthly enjoyment and pleasure, which lead to lustful conduct and a lustful intention—Num. 6:3; Judg. 13:2-20; Psa. 104:15; Eccl. 10:19; 2 Tim. 2:22; 3:1-5.
- C. We must see that God has committed the children to us; so we must set a standard for ourselves in morality, in conduct, and in all moral judgments regarding right and wrong; we must set a high standard for what is ideal, and we must also set a standard for ourselves in spiritual matters—1 Thes. 5:23:
 - 1. A child may remember or forget what you say, but what he sees surely will remain in him forever; he develops his sense of judgment from you, and he also develops his system of values from you—1 Cor. 9:27.
 - 2. Every parent must remember that his actions will be repeated in his children; his actions will not stop with him; the whole life of Christian children depends on the behavior of their parents—cf. 2 Tim. 1:5; 3:15.
 - 3. You must sanctify your words; when your children speak, they should also sanctify their words and be accurate with them; when you say something wrong, you must make a point to admit your mistake; in this manner you will train your children to sanctify their words—1 Tim. 4:12.
- D. We must realize that parents need to exercise self-control, sacrificing their own freedom; God has committed a human body, along with his soul, into our hands; if

we do not exercise self-control and give up our freedom, we will have a difficult time answering to our God in the future—1 Cor. 9:25; Gal. 5:22-23.

E. We must see that in order for us to bring the children to the Lord in a genuine way, we need to be a person who walks with God; we cannot send our children to the Lord merely by pointing our fingers to heaven; we have to walk in front of them—1 Cor. 9:27; Rom. 2:21:

1. After Enoch begot Methuselah, the Bible says that he walked with God; when the burden of the family was upon him, he felt that his responsibility was too great and that he could not manage it by himself; so he began to walk with God—Gen. 5:21-22.

2. When Samson was in the bosom of his mother, he was sanctified to be a Nazarite; Samson was a Nazarite from his mother's womb for the full course of his life—Judg. 13:7.

3. Hannah prayed desperately not mainly for herself but for God; she promised God that if He gave her a male child, she would return the child to Him by the vow of a Nazarite—1 Sam. 1:11, 22, 28.

4. Lot's children were corrupted by living in the wicked city—Gen. 19:15.

F. We must keep, preserve, safeguard, our vessel clean in sanctification before God; it must be holy, separated, and saturated with God and also kept in honor before man—1 Thes. 4:4; Rom. 13:14.

III. According to both the Old Testament and the New Testament, the first thing we must eliminate for the sake of God's dwelling place is our idols—Gen. 35:1-2; Acts 19:19-20:

A. Jacob also charged everyone to purify themselves; we must not only put away the foreign gods, but also purify our whole being; our whole being, manner of life, and expression must be changed—Gen. 35:2; 2 Cor. 7:1.

B. In addition to putting away the foreign gods and purifying themselves, Jacob's household changed their garments; to change garments means to change our manner of life—Gen. 35:2; Rev. 22:14a.

C. The material used in making the golden calf in Exodus 32 was the gold of the earrings belonging to the children of Israel; the record in this chapter makes clear that self-beautification leads to idolatry—vv. 1-3.