

# The Next Generation – A Sermon to Children

**Introduction** – It is no accident, or for lack of volunteers, that we do not have a children’s program going on during the worship service. It is a principled decision. There is nothing more important for a child to learn than the worship of God, both privately and corporately. In addition, God proclaims His covenant promises to us and to our children. It is vital that you, children of believers, understand that you were not put into the family you are in by accident. God placed you personally in the home of Christians, has bestowed His favor upon you, and requires you to obey your parents in their instruction to you to believe upon the Lord Jesus.

**Children in the Worship Service** (Josh 8:35, Luke 18:15-17, Matt 21:16) – As God’s people, we rejoice over hearing infant noises in our midst. It is the sound of God’s covenant blessing and evidence of Him advancing His kingdom through the generations. The sounds of parents quietly correcting their children or even the cry of one being taken out for a more personal time of discipline ought to cause us great delight. Another one is being brought up in the fear and admonition of the Lord. Therefore, it ought to be the normal Christian activity that children of believing parents are in the worship service.

**Some Assembly Required** – It is not enough to just ‘show up’ with your children. They need instruction, examples, practice, encouragements, rewards, and correction. There can be a number of reasons that the nursery is a prudent decision *today*. However, your goal as a parent is to instruct your children not only to sit still, but to participate with God’s people in the service of worship.

**Addressing the Children** – As was the custom of Paul, there are times when particular sub-groups of the church are to be addressed specifically (Col 3:20, Eph 6:4, Acts 21:5). You children have responsibilities in the household of faith as well as your parents. It is important that you understand your vocation, that is, the job that God has called you to.

**The Vocation of a Child** – We all come into this world needing to learn a lot. Your primary vocation, or calling, in your life today is your education. But do not learn selfishly. You are learning words so that you might know the Word. And you are learning how to think and study so that you might bring all your thoughts captive to Christ. You are commanded to love the scriptures (1 Pet 2:1-3). Your formal education is connected very closely to your ability to walk in wisdom. Every thing you do must be done unto the Lord (1 Cor 10:31), and so all your studies must be done honestly and rigorously. As you grow, you will see the connections of all you are learning to your love for the Word. This will be the gift of wisdom.

**Honor Your Father and Mother** (Eph 6:1-3) – This is your other primary calling as a child. You have parents, particular parents that God gave you. Do you want God’s hand of blessing to rest upon you for the rest of your life? Then you must show honor through prompt and cheerful obedience – always looking to the Lord and His promises of blessings forever.

**The Vocation of a Young Man** – As we grow, there are many commands that all of us must obey. But there are also particular distinctions that the Word instructs you in.

**You are to Worship** (Psalm 148:12-13) – The Lord expects your attention here. He commands your worship. No exemptions have been granted for teenage boys. Whether it is ‘cool’ or not is never the issue. In fact...

**Develop a Contempt for ‘the Cool’** (1 John 2:15) – Rejecting worldliness requires dealing with intangibles. And this requires wisdom. We reject legalism but we also reject stupidity, laziness, and apathy over your calling.

**Becoming Christian** (Tit 2:6-8) – Your life should become more and more distinct from the world around you – by the grace of God. To be sober-minded is to be controlled at all times by your mind, that is, your convictions. As a growing leader, you must set the example now of working hard and denying yourself. You should be known for being scrupulous in your word, in your homework, in your use of money. You should be known for your hard and good work, your honor towards your parents (particularly your mother), your distance from any sexual impurity, and your ability to answer your opponents with sound speech.

**The Vocation of a Young Woman** – Again, there are many commands for us all, but as you prepare for the calling of being a woman, there are distinctions.

**Preparing for Womanhood** (Tit 2:4-5) – The woman is the instrumental giver of life. She is equipped by God to provide the nurture which must occur in every family. Women flourish, when given the opportunity, and God’s grace, to fulfill this divinely-ordered calling.

**Let The Women Learn** (1 Tim 2:11) – A calling to the home is anything but a call to being a doormat or being dumb, and anyone who has the privilege of seeing a thriving Christian home can tell. You must be prepared to be a source of wisdom and counsel to your children and your husband. In fact, your call to wisdom is so central to your role that the book of Proverbs calls wisdom – a woman.

**Modesty** (1 Tim 2:9-10, 1 Pet 3:1-4) – One man said “*modesty is a fence which protects a woman’s identity as a woman. Immodesty does not reveal a woman to the world; it rather destroys a woman before the world.*” Do not think that modesty is unconnected to your calling, or is a side issue. And do not think that you know better than your mother or father. Just because ‘it’s fashionable’ doesn’t make it acceptable.

**All of Grace** (Eph 2:8-10) – God has called you to these things. If you rebel against them there are grave consequences. If you adorn your life only with external standards, it is only a matter of time until God reveals the matter. It is a very short time until you are on your own, making your own life and family. Have you submitted to Christ in all things? He is merciful to thousands (of generations) to those who love Him and keep His commandments.

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