

## **A FATHER'S HEART**

During December, the theme of our Wednesday Christmas special is **Turning Hearts**. It is taken from the Greek word *epistrepho* found in Luke 1:16-17. This theme was given to the priest Zachariah while serving in the temple by the angel Gabriel regarding the ministry of JB.

John the Baptist's (JB's) primary ministry was to build the pivot of Believers for the coming of Christ out of an apostate reversionistic nation.

“And he will turn back many of the sons of Israel to the Lord their God.” (Luke 1:16).

God outlined the following two ways that JB was to build the pivot of Believers looking for the coming of Christ out of an apostate reversionistic nation.

- Turn the hearts of the father's back to the children (Luke 1:17a).
- Turn the hearts of the disobedient back to divine wisdom (Luke 1:17b).

This message is relevant to our church ministry in 2007. We have many professional teachers who have been in the school system of the Bible belt for over 30 years, from the elementary level all the way to university level. They all say the same thing – “the problem of our schools is more the parents than the children.”

It is not so much the children that are of control today, but the parents. Many of these parents whose lives are out of control:

- don't know it
- others don't care
- most don't know where to start. **START RIGHT HERE AND RIGHT NOW!**

**Start with this lesson and schedule an appointment with Al Rosenblum.**

**Today's lesson will study THREE aspects Turning Fathers Hearts Back to the Children**

“And it is he who will go as a forerunner before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, **to turn the hearts of the fathers back to the children.**” (Luke 1:17a)

### **1. Start by understanding God's view of your children and the family.**

God teaches us that our children are gifts from God's Grace - to us! **“Behold, children are a gift of the Lord; the fruit of the womb is a reward.” (Ps.127:3) Merry Christmas**

**When parent's hearts are brought back to the children, they will teach their children to trust God.**

“That they should put their confidence in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments, and not be like their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation, a generation that did not prepare its heart, and whose spirit was not faithful to God.” (Ps.78:7-8)

We have a generation of parents that have rebelled against the parenting of God and are unwilling and unable as such to parent their own children.

The Bible is full of examples. **One example is David.** Once he was a man after God's own heart. Then he went off into reversionism and by the time he was willing to turn his heart back to his children, his children were adults engaged in their own reversionism and part of the decline of their nation.

"Each heart knows its own bitterness, and no one else can share its joy." (Prov.14:10, NIV)

Q - Where does it start?

A - RIGHT HERE!

Q - When does it start?

A - RIGHT NOW!

Q - How does it start?

A - WITH YOUR PRAYER!

**Start where David started: "Create (bara / kal impv) in me a clean (tahur / 1 John 1:9) heart, O God, and renew (chadas / piel impv) (Eph.4:22-24; Rom.12:2) a steadfast (nakun / niphal ptc) [fixed right] spirit within me." (Ps.51:10)**

Therefore every parent starts out with a gift of God's Grace and entrusted with the welfare of this child (body, soul, and spirit).

## 2. **It is a sobering experience to become a parent responsible for the development of a baby into a healthy adult in body, soul, and spirit.**

In America's past, the majority of adults who reached parenthood took on this responsibility seriously whether they felt ready or not.

This is not true with the 21<sup>st</sup> century America. We have become a self-absorbing society of adults. We are a society of adults who abuse and abandon our children for self-pleasure **as if** it will have no consequences on our children, marriages, or nation. **NOTHING COULD BE FARER FROM THE TRUTH!** (Gen.6:5; Matt.24:37; 28:19)

**This will get worst unless fathers turn their hearts back to God and back to their children!**

"Yet if in spite of this, you do not obey Me, but act with hostility against Me, then I will act with wrathful hostility against you; and I, even I, will punish you seven times. Further, you shall eat the flesh of your sons and the flesh of your daughters you shall eat." (Lev.26:27-29, 40-42)

Childhood and the home should be a place and time for developing fragrant memories not fragmented memories. Christian parenting is about developing relationships between godly fathers in homes and God, their Father in heaven (Eph.6:1-4; Col.3:20-21; John 1:12-13).

## 3. **During a study of Levirate marriage (Deut.25:5-10), I discovered that the key element necessary for step-parenting is chesed the Hebrew word for kindness.**

"And Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, 'may he be blessed of the Lord who has not withdrawn his kindness to the living and to the dead.' Again Naomi said to her, 'the man is our relative, he is one of our closest relative.'" (Ruth 2:20)

Chesed is the Greek word eleos or mercy. "Mercy assumes need on the part of him who receives it, and resources adequate to meet the need on the part of him who shows it." (Vine's, pg.403)

Our personal experience with God's love should be the great motivator of showing kindness or mercy in our family relationship. "But God, being rich in mercy, because of his great love with which He loved us." (Eph.2:4; Mal.4:6; Prov.14:34)

**As a Stepparent:** It is important for you to be a merciful Goel and show kindness to your stepchildren. It is essential to the wellbeing of the child who has been through the trauma of their parent's divorce, the death of a parent or the abandonment of a parent.

With the divorce rate at 50% and 3 out of 4 divorced parents remarried within 3 years, children are placed in a position of physical or emotional hardship that few adults truly understand. We have become a nation of unwed parents, single parents, stepparents, kin-parents, foster parents, and adopted parents.

We know that parents are to teach children **but who is to teach parents?**

“The godly parent brings blessings to his children and is himself blessed through them.” (Ps.112:2, NIV)

## **WE CAN HELP!**

- Each year our church holds a **Parenting School**. Watch for it on our Church Calendar (February) at <http://www.doctrinalstudies.com/HappeningsIntroPage.shtml>
- You can search our **AUDIO & TEXTUAL Database** by clicking on <http://www.doctrinalstudies.com/dbSearchPage1.shtml> and entering the **KEY WORDS** “**Parent**” or “**Marriage**”.
- We have a course on **Marriage, Divorce and Remarriage** on our church web site by clicking on <http://www.doctrinalstudies.com/indexMD.shtml>
- We have a course on **Parenting Children** on our church web site by clicking on <http://www.doctrinalstudies.com/ParentingBook.shtml>
- We have a certified counselor on staff, Al Rosenblum. Click on [http://www.doctrinalstudies.com/Tour/Tour\\_1-4d.shtml](http://www.doctrinalstudies.com/Tour/Tour_1-4d.shtml)
- We have a summer camp **for parents**. Held at the same time and cost that their children are attending their summer camps. <http://www.seyc.com> (13 – 19) and <http://www.crossroadscamp.net> (9 -12)