

A Parent's Desire

Any normal parent would naturally give his/her offspring the best that he/she can afford. This is only natural. Even our Lord Jesus is very practical in this basic area of parent/child relations. He asks,

"Which of you if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone?
Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake?
If you, then, though you are evil,
know how to give good gifts to your children,
how much more will your Father in heaven
give good gifts to those who ask him."

Matthew 7:9-11

It is what constitutes the "best" things in life that reveals a parent's philosophy of life. Christian parents will do well to consider very seriously what the best things in life they wish to bequeath to their children. To me there is only one thing in my life I desire to bequeath to my children. How successful I have been in the process of transmitting it is still too early to assess.

My prayer and hope for my children is that they will have faith in the Lord Jesus and that early in their lives.

I am thrilled when I read of Paul's remarks concerning Timothy's faith. Paul says,
"I have been reminded of your sincere faith,
which first lived in your grandmother Lois and
in your mother Eunice and,
I am persuaded, now lives in you also."

2 Timothy 1:5

Would not it be wonderful if our faith can be automatically transmitted to our children? But we know that Lois' faith was not automatically transmitted to Eunice. Neither was Eunice's faith automatically transmitted to Timothy. Though not automatically transmitted, it was transmitted, through three generations!

But the prophet Samuel's faith was not transmitted to his children (1 Samuel 8:5). None would fault Samuel's devotion and service to the Lord, but why was not his faith transmitted to his children? Could it be that in his ministry to the Lord, he neglected his ministry to his children? It is said that Billy Sunday won tens of thousands to the Lord, but lost his children to the world. One need not look far to see this tragedy sadly repeated in the lives of some of our local church leaders. I consider a Christian parent greatly blessed of the Lord when his children follow him in the faith and walk after his footsteps in devotion and service to the Lord.

If my children have my faith, I need not fear for their future, for it is secure both in this life and in the life to come. The Lord Jesus will then become their anchor of life, firm and secure (Hebrews 6:9). It is a

tough and sinful world that we are living in. Our children need a ballast, which only the Spirit of God can provide. They need a lamp for their feet and a light for their path to show them the directions through life. The Word of God is that lamp and that light (Psalm 119:105). As a rule, they are more likely to succeed in life with Christ than without Christ.

In page 59 of the book, *Religious Trends in Singapore*, it has been suggested that

"it is probably worthwhile making a detailed study to find out whether Christian work ethics, such as the emphasis on thrift, industry, perseverance, the desire to excel (in order to please God), the importance of education, a tendency to take 'low-risks' occupations and a distaste for wasteful indulgences have generally helped Christians move out of a lower-income group faster than the others."

I have with my own eyes over the years seen many move up the social and economic ladder of society after they become Christians. I am more inclined to believe that the study will confirm the connection between the Christian faith and personal and social improvement. When we do our work of evangelism we are contributing more than just to the spiritual well-being of our fellows; we are also contributing to their social well-being. CEF has made significant contributions in the area of child evangelism.

CEF has helped me train over three dozens Sunday School teachers in my former church and is presently helping me train over a dozen in my present church, Emmanuel Christian Fellowship. I appreciate the ministry of the Singapore CEF. Its contribution to the life of the evangelical church in Singapore is significant. Perhaps it can consider developing a course to help parents communicate their faith to their children, the priceless treasure to be bequeathed to the next generation.

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