

Transitions: From My Parents' Faith to My Faith

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake from a lesson by Mark Copeland)

Introduction:

- A. Many parents and local churches are very concerned for their children's salvation and spirituality
 1. Some neglect it until just before the children leave home, assuming that they will develop faith on their own
 2. Some think that as long as they make their children attend and follow their instructions that the children will absorb their parents' faith
 3. And some take a caring interest in helping their children develop their own faith from the faith
 4. We watch our youth leave home; we want the best for them, and pray that they will keep the faith. And then we grieve when a number of them leave the faith.
- B. Why does this keep happening?
 1. We like to blame others
 - a. Parents blame the schools, other children, the media, the world, or the local church
 - b. Elders and preachers blame the parents, or the children, or unfaithful members
 - c. Children blame the church, their parents, or life itself
 2. What we need to do is stop blaming others, take responsibility for our own part, and work together.
 3. As long as a person's faith is dependent on the faith of someone else, they will be weak and unable to survive on their own
 - a. In order for a young person's faith to survive on its own, they must transition from their parents' faith to their own faith
 - b. Elders and preachers can teach them to appreciate the Lord, His word, and to be spiritual for themselves
 - c. Parents must give their children opportunities to grow their own faith, to test their own abilities, to examine their own beliefs
 - d. Young people must be honest with themselves and with those who are helping them grow, and believe that they do so out of love and a desire for the well-being of the young
 4. Coral telling the girls that they could tell friends that Mom doesn't allow them to do that, but that they must grow to the point where they say that it is not something that they believe is right
 - a. Krystal and "Bruthe is not a Christian" because it was what we taught, to choosing Jonathan for herself, a devout Christian
 - b. The young can do the same thing adults can do; they can make the faith their faith
 5. "We cannot always build the future for our youth, but we can build our youth for the future. A child is not a Christian child, but a child of Christian parents. A child who is told she is a 'child of Christian parents' should realize that faith is something for her to choose when she becomes old enough to do so. Do not indoctrinate your

children. Teach them how to think for themselves, how to evaluate evidence, and that it is acceptable to question and disagree while learning. In such a setting, when the child chooses to believe, it becomes a choice to which she will commit her life.”

I. YOUNG ADULTS CAN COMMIT TO THE FAITH

A. Old Testament examples

1. Joseph, resisting fornication - Gen. 39:7-10
2. David, fighting for God's honor - 1Sam. 17:37, 42-47
3. Daniel, choosing not to defile himself - Dan. 1:8
4. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego - Dan. 3:16-18

B. New Testament examples

1. Mary, who found favor with God and rejoiced in Him - Luke 1:30, 46-49
2. Timothy, who despite his youth, was to be an example to others
 - a. 1Tim. 4:12; 2Tim. 2:22

II. TEMPTATIONS DISTINCTIVE TO YOUTH

A. There is warfare within, often experiencing it for the first time - 1John 2:15-17

B. There is warfare without

1. Pressure from other youth encouraging you to be evil - 1Cor. 15:13
2. Social pressure: humanism, hedonism, atheism - 1Peter 4:3-4
3. Hypocrisy and apathy in members of the church - Rev. 2:4, 3:15

III. YOU HAVE POWER

A. There is power God gives you - Phil. 4:13, 2:12-13; Eph. 3:16, 20, 6:10-13

1. God stands ready to help you to be spiritually strong - 1Cor. 10:13

B. There are weapons in your arsenal

1. God's Word - Psalm 119:9, 11; Matt. 4:4, 7, 10-11; James 1:21
2. Prayer - Matt. 6:13, 26:41; Phil. 4:6-7
3. The Church - Heb. 3:13-14, 10:23-25

C. God gives you the same power and weapons to make you spiritually strong that He has given to those you admire

IV. YOU HAVE THE ABILITY TO CHOOSE

A. But you do not have the power to avoid the consequences of your choices

1. Gal. 6:7-8

2. Many lives have been ruined by bad judgment and choices that were not well thought out. Don't spend the first twenty years of your life making the next fifty years of your life painful and miserable

B. Choose, for yourself, to become a spiritual person

1. Ask in faith, believing that God will give what you need - James 1:5-8
2. It will enhance the quality of your life - Prov. 3:13-18

C. Become a Christian and serve the Lord from your faith, from your heart, for yourself and no other. In this way, you will commit yourself to the Lord for life.