

Home Improvement Demonstrate Don't Debate Joshua 24:14-15
May 27, 2012

Leslie Sabo Jr. story: play video

His life demonstrated sacrifice and honor for his country and his wife. His life was a living lesson about great virtues we should imitate. Soldiers who pay the ultimate sacrifice disarm any debate we could have about their patriotism. They demonstrate love and honor for country through a picture of sacrifice that speaks greater than any words.

As we continue in our sermon series using biblical principles for improving especially our home life, one principle we can find from scripture is for us to demonstrate the type of life we desire our family members to live.

A woman by the name of Myra Turner wrote that her child drew a picture of her and then gave it to her and candidly said "See momma you have big eyes and a big mouth." (families.com, 5/23/12) She wondered if that picture was a way her child was trying to say perhaps she raised her voice more often than she needed to.

Because we all sin and no of us are perfect our children are going to be able to draw some less than flattering pictures of us. Because we all sin and none of us are perfect your parents or grand parents are able to draw some less than complimentary pictures of how you misbehave.

Exodus 20:12 is the fourth of the Ten Commandments that instructs children to honor their parents, but the way were living needs to be worth honoring. In all fairness would God want our

children to honor everything we say and do?

There is a scene from the Old Testament book of Joshua that reminds us in our relationships, including family we need to give our children a living picture of how God calls us to live. I want to break this passage up in segments so just remain seated but listen to verses 14-15 from the 24th chapter.

Read Scripture

Words Are Not Enough

Joshua's time as leader was winding down. So he was taking his last shot at urging God's people to be 100 percent totally sold out for God. In that scripture we heard Joshua say things like
"serve God with sincerity and faithfulness"
"put away false gods"
"choose who you are going to serve"

And then Joshua gave the words that many preachers have preached down through the ages, Joshua said, **"But as for me and my house we will serve the Lord."**

Joshua knew his people well. He knew they had been unfaithful. He knew some of them were still worshipping false gods. Meaning there were people in the assembly as he spoke who were carrying around some little statue that represented their false god. They may have had in their tent or houses some image they used to worship others gods. They had false gods, they had images and things they were more loyal to than the God who brought them out of slavery.

Joshua was trying to let them know words are not enough to make sure the right things go on in our homes. Just like his people had their false gods, we can have things in our lives we

love, cherish, and obey more than we do the Lord. We can have sources that influence us more than God's word. We may talk the talk, but God sees as well as our children or our parents the true picture of our lives.

Is it clear or just talk to any who enter your home Jesus Christ is first and foremost in charge of your home? To say we are raising our kids up in a Christian home for some can be just talk because too much of what goes on in the home and is tolerated in the home is anything but Christ like, Christ honoring. Talk, words are not enough.

The Damage of Inconsistency

Listen from verses 16-18 the response of the people.

Read scripture.

Verses 16-18 have the people insisting they will become faithful. And did you hear how they can name what God had done for them. They tell how God had brought them up out of Egypt and out of slavery, he did great signs, and gave protection and drove out the enemies. They know how good God had been and how God had worked in their lives.

But listen to how Joshua responded, read - 19 -20.

Joshua dismissed their words. He knew something about his people and I am sure it broke his heart to be that brutally honest but too often they had drawn a picture of inconsistency in living for the Lord. They were too often inconsistent in how closely they followed God's word. They too often reaped consequences for how they lived because their lives were inconsistent with God's direction..

C.S. Lewis once said that **“Fine feelings, new insights, greater interest in religion mean nothing unless they make our actual**

behavior better; just as in an illness, feeling better is not much good if the thermometer shows your temperature is still going up.” (Mere Christianity, p.207)

There is damage done in the relationships in the home by the inconsistency in our lifestyle.

The damage includes the erosion of a parents credibility and authority. Children cannot trust what parents and others who lead claim about God if they don't see the example lived.

The damaged done is confusion about what is expected. When the inconsistency is demonstrated by parents then the children or any one else we are trying to influence will be unsure what they need to do. If kids and teenagers cannot demonstrate consistency about doing the right things, parents pull privileges and trust less.

Illustration: I read about a research project that monitored over 430 teenagers throughout their high school years. The project was to ask why kids have problems with hostile, un-socially acceptable behavior. The research found that the majority of the kids that had the problem behavior had parents who were harsh in discipline, hostile and inconsistent in correcting their children.

Kids Model Parents Antisocial Behavior By Rick Nauert PhD *Senior News Editor*
Reviewed by John M. Grohol, Psy.D. on February 9, 2007

Joshua was warning the people that the inconsistency they accepted was not going to work. It's why Joshua said, "you cannot serve the Lord he is holy, jealous..." When Joshua says, God will not forgive that is in the sense that because the people had a recent history of trying to play it both ways, God was not going to forgive half hearted, insincere manipulative religion.

Today as a parent take stock of how you might be living out the inconsistencies before your kids.

Kids take a good look at how your saying one thing but your actions tell a different story.

Transition to Next Point

I read where a woman by the name of Krstyn Crow talked about how parenting was like people watching a model walk down a fashion show runway. She said remember that a model:

- Attracts attention.
- Motivates the observer.
- Demonstrates the task or behavior.

Krystyn Crow families.com

Her point is good parenting must demonstrate what is expected. The closing scripture we hear from Joshua teaches how vital that was for his family and his home.

Read 21-24

Demonstrate; Don't Debate

The people insisted they will change. Joshua called for demonstration/action of the change they will live. Joshua had modeled/lived what God expected from his people.

Remember why there is power in a demonstration of what you expect from others.

Joshua had drawn a picture with his life what God expected from them. His life gave a vision of what faithfulness to God looked like.

Joshua also demonstrated what God expected can be done.

You know in some ways today we Christians and churches should be at our strongest in our society. Churches ought to be thriving

instead of shrinking and closing. Never before have we had so much in the way of resources to parent our kids, mentor our children and encourage others. We have internet, we can travel, we can have resources at our finger tips, but it all still comes down to what passionate faithfulness to God do we demonstrate.

Proverbs 22:6 says we are to “train a child up in the right way...” But the old saying is, you cannot give away what you don’t possess.

Do we model

A Life of prayer

Knowledge of the Bible being applied to our lives

Worship Attendance

Service in the church

Service on behalf of Christ in the community

Humility to give and receive forgiveness.

Missionary Stanley Jones has said, “**Morality is not built up it is built in. You don’t break moral laws; you break yourself upon them.**” P.67 Jones

Do the people in our relationships see our will be broken in order to do God’s will, especially in our home?

If you don’t want your kids watching much television because it corrupts; make sure you don’t.

If you want your kids to clean - up their rooms, clean up their talk or their behavior - make sure you demonstrate a vision of what that cleanliness looks like. Make sure your behavior shows them it can be done.

If you’re trying to get a friend to come to worship God; can you tell them specifically how your worship of God is working in your life?

George Barna - Did a survey back in the 90's and found that the Christian parents who were involved in various aspects of Christian living besides worship had kids who were more likely to serve at soup kitchen, help with vacation bible school, attend Sunday school be regulars in worship.

- They saw clearly how God worked in the life of their parents. They saw clearly the teachings of scripture could be lived and the reality of God experienced.

Conclusion

As I talk with folks I learn some people right now are in the midst of major house renovation; while others maybe are just repainting a room.

Spiritually we're at different places in our home life. God might use Joshua words to reveal your home needs some major spiritual improvement? Your heavy on the talk and words but very light on living concretely the teachings of Jesus. Maybe others have a pretty solid walk with God; but still there is some home improvement for you to as well.

Parent, grand-parent son or daughter, make the difference in your home by demonstrating you are genuine about serving and living for the Lord.