

What Do I Want For My Grown Children? (Part II)

The kindling for these thoughts came when one of my kids said, "Dad, I want to please you." So I began to wonder, have I made it clear to my kids just what would please me? Last week and this week I decided to put in writing just exactly what I pray for my kids. Just to refresh, here are the points from last week's article: . I want them (every one of them) to meet me in heaven. 2. I want them to have a deep, personal relationship with Jesus Christ. 3. I want them attending and serving a church of like faith and order. 4. I want them to stay married. 5. I want them to live Spirit-controlled lives. Today I want to add two more points.

6. I want them to be joy-filled, not pleasure driven.

It has been said that happiness requires "happenings" to continue to make one happy. Contrariwise, the Christian should be living a joyful life which comes from the inside-out. True happiness comes from Christ within. *"These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full"* (John 15:11). *"Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory"* (I Peter 1:8).

Dr. Bob Jones Sr. said, "Never sacrifice the permanent on the altar of the immediate." Pleasure (of the world) - driven happiness is short-lived and never satisfies. Moses, in line to live the luxurious life of a Pharaoh, deserted this path, "Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season" (Hebrews 11:25). I want my children happy, but not at the expense of moral misconduct. I want my kids to always know the joy that comes from saying no to evil and yes to righteousness. *"Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed"* (John 8:31). The greatest principle my dad taught me was, obedience to the unenforceable. In other words, do right without someone enforcing you to do right.

Lest you think we are separating fun from dedication to the Lord, let me share with you three questions we should be asking before our involvement in entertainment, activity and lifestyle choices:

a. Does this glorify God?

I believe some activity, although secular, can glorify God. Not everything Bach wrote was for church. For instance, a delightful and comedic piece was written by J.S. Bach is entitled: *Coffee Cantata*. Several years ago, my wife and I heard this at a concert and thoroughly enjoyed it, with a clear conscience. The key is found in I Corinthians 10:31, *"Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."* Ask yourself, "Can I do this for God's glory?"

b. Does my activity take me to a better place?

All entertainment, literature and music take us somewhere. When Saul was oppressed, he found escape in David's music: *"And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took an harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him"* (I Samuel 16:23). Entertainment affects us emotionally: *"was refreshed,"* physically: *"was well"* and spiritually: *"and the evil spirit departed from him."* The blessed music of David transported Saul to a much better place. Does your music take you to a better place? The Bible is a great example of stories that are told, some include bad things done by wicked people. Yet, never does the Bible applaud doing wrong. It illustrates the consequences of wrong and the blessing of right. Let us therefore not be entertained by literature or audio/visual entertainment that makes heroes out of villains and losers out of moral people.

c. Does what I do enhance my witness?

Jesus said, *"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven"*(Matthew 5:16). God's Word says, *"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful"* (Psalm 1:1).

It is true, we have freedom in Christ. But we are not to allow our liberty in Christ to be a license to sin or to relish questionable lifestyles that may offend. Paul said, *"But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak"*(I Corinthians 8:9). Again, Jesus said, *"...that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father..."*(Matthew 5:16). If we don't care what others think about our Lord and how we live, we are not only courting sin, we are living selfishly. The Bible is clear: *"For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself"* (Romans 14:7).

7. I want them to be centered in God's will for their lives.

George W. Truett said, "Success, what is success? Success is finding the will of God for your life and doing it." The Bible says, *"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God"* (Romans 12:2). The will of God for our life is good, acceptable and perfect. Recently while at a speaking engagement in Kentucky, I met a man that had gone through crisis in his job, health issues in his family and with the church he was a member. But no matter what he was experiencing, no matter when you asked him how he was doing or how things were going, his answer was always, "Perfect, just perfect." His answer reminds me of the old hymn that says, "when I am happy with Him, December's as pleasant as May."

Being rich or famous pales in comparison to finding, knowing and doing the will of God. There is not enough gold in Fort Knox that can buy God's peace or accolades of men that may substitute for the blessing of being in God's will. My heart's desire for my children is that they put Jesus first and accomplish His will for their life: *"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you"*(Matthew 6:33). If doing the will of God brings you comforts of this life, fine...but the goal is Jesus and God's best for you. *"I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth"* (III John, verse 4).

- Pastor Pope -

[Back to Pastor's Word](#)