

The Power of The Father

Introduction

The fact that our fathers hold great power over is not a mystery. All we have to do is look into our relationship with our own father and their influence becomes very evident. Why is this true? We need to remember that God the Father is also a father and it was His desire and intentional design. Therefore, it is very helpful to understand His commands and His design. This is also why Satan hates and belittles God the Father in any way possible.

Fathers have a great capacity for good and great blessing and also for tragedy in the lives of their children. I want to approach this study first from Scripture or God's design to demonstrate God's view of fatherhood and also I want to demonstrate this power for both good and evil from psychology. First, let's study His Word.

The Power of Dad from Scripture

Genesis 3:1-7 says, "Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which *is* in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree *was* good for food, and that it *was* pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make *one* wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat."

These verses tell of the first temptation, which was to belittle a father, and also how sin came into this world. Romans 5:12 says, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."

Why does this verse teach that sin entered into this world by the sin of "one man?" The verses in Genesis 3 quoted above are very clear that Eve sinned by listening to the devil and then by eating of the forbidden fruit. Genesis 3:15 makes the issue more cloudy when God said "I will put enmity between thee [Satan] and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it [her seed] shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

It is obvious that God imputed the original sin of mankind to Adam and not Eve. Why? As in every study of Scripture we must always remember His nature. He will not and cannot violate it. He must always be fair and just because that is His nature. If there is ever one example to the contrary then God is liar and guilty of sin and then no longer holy or trustworthy. So how could God do this to Adam and not be guilty of favoritism or sin? We must also remember the He is the rule maker, not you or me.

We find part of the answer in Numbers 30:1-8, "And Moses spake unto the heads of the tribes concerning the children of Israel, saying, this is the thing which the Lord hath commanded. If a man vow a vow unto the Lord, or swear an oath to bind his soul with a bond; he shall not break his word, he shall do according to all that proceedeth out

of his mouth. If a woman also vow a vow unto the Lord, and bind herself by a bond, being in her father's house in her youth; And her father hear her vow, and her bond wherewith she hath bound her soul, and her father shall hold his peace at her: then all her vows shall stand, and every bond wherewith she hath bound her soul shall stand. But if her father disallow her in the day that he heareth; not any of her vows, or of her bonds wherewith she hath bound her soul, shall stand: and the Lord shall forgive her, because her father disallowed her. And if she had at all an husband, when she vowed, or uttered ought out of her lips, wherewith she bound her soul; And her husband heard it, and held his peace at her in the day that he heard it: then her vows shall stand, and her bonds wherewith she bound her soul shall stand. But if her husband disallowed her on the day that he heard it; then he shall make her vow which she vowed, and that which she uttered with her lips, wherewith she bound her soul, of none effect: and the Lord shall forgive her.”

These verses list seven commands or responsibilities of the man in relationship to his wife and daughters, but you will also notice that he does not have the same responsibility or authority for his sons.

1. If a man makes a vow to God and binds his soul by an oath, he shall not break his word, but shall perform all that comes from his mouth (Numbers 30:1-2; Psalm 15:4).
2. If an unmarried woman makes a vow to the Lord, binding herself by an oath, it shall stand and she shall perform it—unless her father refuses to let it to stand on the day he hears of it. If he objects to her vow on that day, it shall not stand, and the Lord will forgive her because her father objected (Numbers 30:3-5).
3. If a married woman makes a vow to God and binds herself with an oath, it shall stand and she shall perform it—unless her husband objects to it on the day that he hears of it. If he objects to it on that day, it shall not stand, and the Lord will forgive her because her husband objected (Numbers 30:6-8).
4. If a divorced woman or a widow makes a vow and binds her soul with an oath to the Lord, it shall stand (Numbers 30:9).
5. If the vow of a divorced woman or a widow was made while she had a husband, it shall stand—unless her husband objected to it the day he heard of it. If her husband objected that day, it shall not stand, and the Lord will forgive her, because her husband objected (Numbers 30:10-12).
6. Every vow and binding oath that a married woman makes may be established by her husband or made void. If he holds his peace day after day, then he establishes her vow, but if he objects the day he hears about it, it shall not stand (Numbers 30:13-14).
7. If a husband hears a wife's vow and does not object to it the day he hears about it, but objects later, he shall bear her iniquity for causing her to break it (Numbers 30:15).

For God to be fair and trustworthy Adam had to have known his responsibilities. Adam and Eve walked and talked with God in the garden. It is plain in Scripture that Adam and Eve both knew that it was wrong to eat of the tree. God also demonstrated forgiveness and repentance when He killed that animal to clothe Adam and Eve. The fruit of their sin was demonstrated in their shame, guilt and fear of God.

Adam failed in his responsibilities to his wife in two ways. First, he did not protect her from the serpent. He allowed the serpent to tempt or beguile her. I believe that he had the responsibility to be a guard dog at the door of his home protecting his wife.

Second, he did not set her vow or sin aside the above passage required him to do. God has given men great responsibility and authority. In this responsibility we can bless or curse.

God continues to teach and demonstrate the responsibility that He has given to the man in several verses that teach that the sin of the man or father is passed on to future generations.

Exodus 20:5

“Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me.”

Exodus 34:7

“Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation.”

Numbers 14:18

“The LORD is longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation.”

Deuteronomy 5:9

“Thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me.”

What do these verses mean? Why is it the sin of the fathers and not the mothers that is passed on? I have heard some teach that these are just “Old Testament curses” that have no application for today. First, God’s Word is never a curse. The only curse comes from how we misuse or misapply His Word.

Unrighteousness brings with it a negative consequence. It is God’s will that all serve Him. When He says that He is a “jealous God,” He is saying that He is zealous for each and every person that He created. It is His will that none perish. It is His will that every human experiences His love and mercy. But in the sovereignty of our free will, most say “NO” to Him.

The practical application of these verses is found in the fact that as parents, we pass on our way of thinking, our way of dealing with the challenges of life, and our behaviors to our children and our children’s children. If mom was extremely fearful, her children will also be fearful. If dad is angry and bitter, his children will approach life with the same attitude. We see all the behaviors, attitudes and pathologies of this life passed on to our offspring.

If a person has been sexually, emotionally or physically abused, he will probably abuse others and/or himself. He has been conditioned and learned “that is how it is done.” If dad was a liar, then the son and daughter will probably be a liar also. We see this in the story of Abraham, which we will look at later.

In reading these verses you notice that Scripture refers to the sin of the father and never the mothers. It is obvious that mother's sin and that their offspring will learn behavior and attitudes from them, but Adam, not Eve, was the moral, spiritual, and legal head and representative of all mankind. In God's design the spiritual responsibility and penalty for sin is passed on through the male.

God placed all of mankind in his loins and when he sinned, he acted on behalf of the entire race. Thus he was responsible for sin being passed upon all mankind. He acted not as a private person, but for the race that was to come from him, to share his blessings if he obeyed or his curses if he sinned (Genesis 2:17; Genesis 3:1-24; Romans 5:12-21; II Cor. 15:21-22,45-48). We virtually gave consent to what he did in the same sense that Levi paid tithes while still in Abraham's loins (Hebrews 7:9-10). It was God's plan that sin be reckoned as passing from the fathers to the children, not through the mothers (Exodus 20:5; Exodus 34:7; Leviticus 26:39-40; Numbers 14:18; Deut. 5:9). This part of His plan and provision for our salvation.

Scripture attributes human reproduction to women without sinful responsibility in terms of passing sin from parent to offspring. This is how Jesus could be born of a woman, a virgin, and still not be sinful flesh.

This why Paul tell us in Romans 5:12 that sin entered into the world by one man. Romans 5:12 says, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."

The Seed of the Woman

Genesis 3:15 says, "And I [God] will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." This passages refers to the seed of the woman, not the seed of man. Why, and who is the seed of the woman? This could only refer to the coming of the Son of God through Mary (Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 7:14; Isaiah 9:6-7; Isaiah 11:1; Matthew 1; Luke 1:31-35; John 1:14; Romans 1:1-3; Romans 8:3; Galatians 3:16,19; Galatians 4:4; Phil. 2:5-11; I Tim. 3:16; II Tim. 2:8; Hebrews 1:1-8; Hebrews 2:9-18; I John 4:1-6; Rev. 5:5). This is the first of innumerable prophecies of the coming Messiah that are found in the Old Testament.

The virgin birth is one of the most essential doctrines of the whole plan of God. Without faith in it and in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ one cannot be saved (I Cor. 15:1-8; I John 4:1-6).

But there is more to this because this is also important in proving that Jesus is the Christ and God that He has no sin or even a sin nature. Scripture is very plain in teaching that sin is passed through the man, not the woman. If Jesus were born of the seed of a man He would have been born with a sin nature, the flesh, which is the nature of the devil. The Messiah was born from the seed of a woman because this is the only way that the Messiah could become a man without sin or a sin nature. If the Messiah were of the seed of a man he would be automatically guilty of sin. We must always remember that God has a plan and that He does not make any mistakes.

Let's switch gears and take a look at the practical application of these verses. How have the sins of our fathers been passed on? How has this affected each of us in practical ways? Disease, family dysfunction, our genetic make up and/or a righteous inheritance are all part of the answer.

Generational Sin and/or Inherited Dysfunction and Disease

When we hear the words “genetic” or “generational” we usually react in fear and in one way or another proclaim that there is nothing we can do. We believe that we have been victimized by a cruel quirk of nature. Often “generational” or “genetic” becomes an escape from personal responsibility. But we need to remember that God has commanded us to rebuild the old waste places and the desolations of many generations (Isaiah 61:4). If He has commanded us to rebuild our generations then it must be possible.

For many years science has taught our genetics were fixed and unchangeable. But the latest research is now demonstrating that this is not true. Just because something is genetic does not mean that it is a dead end and that there is no hope. Science is finally coming to the point of agreeing with Scripture.

As I wrote in the study of the brain in, *In His Own Image*, our genetic make up and our neuro-pathways are affected by experience. Dr. Daniel Siegel in his book *The Developing Mind* demonstrates how our experiences, especially those earliest in life, dictate which genes are activated, how these express, how our nervous system develops, and how neuro-pathways are formed. These experiences dictate how we think and process. Dr. Siegel demonstrates how both positive and negative thoughts and emotions affect our genetic make up and our thinking process (neuro-pathways). He also teaches that as our experience change our genetic expression and our neuro-pathways also change. We will discuss this more later.

In a very practical way our negative ways of thinking and reacting (sins), as well as our positive thoughts and coping mechanisms, are passed on to our children. We can see in the pathologies of life and in Scripture how our children mimic our behavior.

Righteous and unrighteous choices bring a consequence. It is God’s will that all serve Him. When He says that He is a “jealous God,” He is saying that He is zealous for each and every person that He created. It is His will that none perish. It is His will that every human experiences His love and mercy. But in the sovereignty of our free will, many say “no” to Him.

Sociology demonstrates that as parents, we pass on our way of thinking, our way of dealing with the challenges of life, and our behaviors to our children and our children’s children. If mom was extremely fearful, her children will also be fearful. If dad is angry and bitter, his children will approach life with the same attitude. We see all the behaviors, attitudes and pathologies of this life passed on to our offspring.

If a person has been sexually, emotionally or physically abused, he will probably abuse others and/or himself. He has been conditioned and has learned “that is how it is done.” If dad was a liar, then the son and daughter will probably be a liar also. We see this in the story of Abraham.

Abraham was afraid that the king would kill him and take his wife Sarai. So he lied to Pharaoh and told him that Sarai was his sister. Later Abraham traveled to the land of the Philistines where Abimelech was king. He told the exact same lie again. Then forty years later, Abraham’s son Isaac, and his wife Rebekah, traveled into the land of the Philistines, where Abimelech was still king. Isaac told the exact same lie that his father told forty years earlier.

Isaac had two sons, Esau and Jacob. Rebekah, who had already lied, along with her husband Isaac, got into a discussion with Jacob over the birthright and together they

deceived Isaac and lied to him. Now we have another generation of liars, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. It doesn't stop there.

Jacob had twelve sons. Ten of the sons were jealous of Joseph. They killed an animal, kidnapped Joseph, dipped his coat of many colors in the blood, took it back to their father and said that an animal had just killed Joseph (Genesis 37). They lied to Jacob. If it had not been for the intercession of Judah to sell Joseph into slavery, Joseph would have been killed. Now we have four generations of liars. Not only that, Jacob's wife Rachel lied to her father, Laban, over the issue of idols (Genesis 31:19). Now we have both men and women lying.

If you look into your own life, I believe that you can find examples of similar behaviors or attitudes that have passed down through your generations. Negative emotions and behavior have severe consequences in our mental and physical health. Positive emotions and attitudes will have a corresponding positive affect on our physical health.

God Has an Answer

There are also several passages that demonstrate confession for the sins of the fathers.

Nehemiah 9:1-2 says, "Now in the twenty and fourth day of this month the children of Israel were assembled with fasting, and with sackclothes, and earth upon them. And the seed of Israel separated themselves from all strangers, and stood and confessed their sins, and the iniquities of their fathers." Daniel 9 and Leviticus 26:40-45 are other examples.

Passages from Mark 9, Luke 9 and Matthew 17 relate the story of a father with a sick son. In each of these accounts, Jesus rebukes a "faithless" and/or "perverse generation." As you read these accounts, you will also notice that Jesus did not (and I believe could not) heal the boy until after the father repented of his unbelief and asked Jesus to help his unbelief.

Mark 9:17-27 says, "And one of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit; And wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him: and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away: and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out; and they could not. He [Jesus] answereth him, and saith, O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I suffer you? Bring him unto me. And they brought him unto him: and when he saw him, straightway the spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming. And he asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child. And oftentimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us. Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief. When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him. And the spirit cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him: and he was as one dead; insomuch that many said, He is dead. But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose."

In Mark 9:21, Jesus asked the father how long the boy had been sick, and the father said since childhood or infancy. In verse 22 the father says, “but if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us.” This was the desperate cry of a father for his son: “Help, if you can.” He did not believe that Jesus really could or would heal his son. In verse 23, Jesus looked at that father and he said, “If you can believe...?” In others words, “It’s not a matter, of if I can, it’s a matter if you can believe.” But the father was so discouraged and so disappointed and so beat up by the spirit of unbelief and the spirit that made his son deaf, dumb and mute, he wasn’t able to believe God. He wasn’t able to believe the promise of God.

In verse 24, the father of the “child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.” Then Jesus cast out the dumb and deaf spirit and the boy was healed. He cast out the spirit and the boy was healed after the father repented for his unbelief. It was the father’s unbelief that prevented the disciples from casting the demon out. Unbelief also prevented Jesus from doing the works of the Father in healing this boy.

The dumb and deaf spirit blinded the spiritual eyes of the father, seeking to prevent him from believing. But it was not just the father’s sin. It was in the generations. Sometimes we really want to believe that God can and will heal, but the healing does not happen. There is a generational sin of unbelief that must be repented of and broken.

The passages continue to say “this kind comes out by prayer and fasting.” It is usually taught that “this kind” refers to the demon. I believe that Jesus is referring to the sin of unbelief that comes out by prayer and fasting.

I firmly believe that “all things are possible” with God. But as you study Scripture, you will see that only one thing prevented Jesus from doing His work. Only unbelief stopped Jesus from doing mighty miracles (Mark 6: 4-6).

We believe that it is appropriate to confess iniquities of the past generations as well as those in our lives. We find that it is very important to recognize the iniquities and unbelief (sins) in our families and our lives and then repent. In doing this, we break the cycle and establish a new generation in righteousness. We have led hundreds of people in this type of prayer and have seen them set free of many bondages. This is how the Blood of Jesus renews our minds (Hebrews (9:14).

There are also verses that teach that His righteousness is forever.

Isaiah 51:7-8: “Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings. For the moth shall eat them up like a garment and the worm shall eat them like wool: but my righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation from generation to generation.”

Let’s make this true in our lives and families.

As we have seen in the life of Abraham, family trees are a very important diagnostic tool, because behavior and health problems tend to repeat themselves. We see patterns that repeat from mothers and fathers to their children. This is true in both biological and spiritual disease. Psychologists also have told us that certain personality characteristics and behaviors, such as rage, anger, or molestation, roll over to the next generation.

Would you like to prevent disease in your children, and your children’s, children? Do you think it's possible?

When we get involved with people in our ministry process, we look at the family trees on both sides to see what is in the family package. If we don't deal with what's

happened in the family tree, and if you don't deal with what's in your personal lives, it will deal with you and your children.

If we want to do something for our children, let's go before God and get our lives straightened out so that we can break the power of sin. Genetically inherited diseases no longer have to exist.

Joe's Story (not the real name)

Let me tell you a little about a friend of mine. He was raised by a very demanding father. A father that did not know how to love. A father that "disciplined" by telling Joe that he would never amount to anything. He used a nickname that was very degrading to Joe. Others in the community picked up on the name and also used it.

Joe learned to despise his father. And in the mind of a child he internalized the feelings and abuse and decided that it was his fault. There must be something wrong with him or his dad would have loved him. In truth Joe's dad was being a father in the same way that he was fathered.

As time went on Joe learned to compensate. He built walls around himself. He would never let anyone get to really know him. He became a very successful businessman. Very aggressive and at times ruthless. He did not know any other way. He had to protect himself, even though he was a Christian. On the surface Joe is the most confident person in the world. You would never dream that he had any self-doubt. But inside he is one of the most hurting people in the world.

He got married and had a family. Since he never learned to love himself he did not know how to love his wife and his children. He truly did love them as he loved himself. Scripture tells to love our wives as our selves. Unfortunately that is not what we do. We need to love our selves as Christ loves us, then we can love our families as Christ intended.

Scripture teaches that we will reap what we sow. The self-bitterness in Joe's life resulted in lupus. Lupus is an auto-immune disease where the immune system attacks the connective tissues in the body. The lack of self-esteem also resulted in a broken marriage. Joe has also developed the same relationship with his children that he had with his father that his father had with his father. Here we have 4 generations. Where does it stop? I will tell you where. Now! Right now! Joe has learned and he has put his marriage back together and is restoring his relationship with his kids.

My Story

My story just is a little different than Joe's. My dad was never there. He was always too busy. When he was home my parents argued and fought constantly.

My memories of childhood are lying in bed listening to the arguments, and then in the mind of a child blaming myself. I felt it was somehow my fault that Dad did not want to be home, and that it was my fault that my parents fought. This was so upsetting to me that I wet the bed until I was 10.

My parents got divorced when I was in the 8th grade. Dad lived about 3 miles away and I did not see him for 5 years. All the way through school he went to only 1 of my ball games. As I grew up I too built shells around me. I would let few get to know

me. I could not trust anyone. Not even God. But this was all on the inside. On the outside I was happy and outgoing.

For me, God was much like my earthly father. I knew he was there but he was always too busy for me. I made God guilty by association. I wanted to serve him but it was not out of love. It was out of obligation. I was driven to gain acceptance and love from others. I could never gain the love of my dad but I would not give up.

This is the power of dad that I am talking about. I could never confront him. Sadly he never changed, even on his deathbed. There is something about the position or power of “dad” that will not allow a child to go to their father, except in destructive anger. You know something; it is no different in your family.

Joe could never confront his dad and tell him how he really felt. I could not either. Joe’s kids can not confront him either. My kids cannot confront me either. Your kids can not confront you. If these relationships are going to heal, DAD must do it!!! Dad must go the extra mile, over and over again until he regains the trust of his own children and wife.

A couple of years ago I wrote my two sons a letter asking for their forgiveness for some of the things that remembered doing wrong. When I became a father I purposed in my heart that I was going to be different than my dad was. I worked hard at it. But I blew it in many ways.

Most of us relate to God the Father in the same way that we have related to our earthly father. As I have worked through this God taught me a paradigm shift in how I am to relate to Him. He came to me one day and called me “son,” and said to me, “Art, how much to you love your sons?” It is very difficult to put into words how much I love my children. God told me to multiply my love for my sons a billion times and then I would begin to understand His love for me.

Think about the most important person in the world to you. Multiply your love by a billion times and then you will begin to understand how much He loves you. Work on the paradigm shift in your relationship to God. In the business world we place a value on something by what someone is willing to pay for it. What was God the Father and Jesus willing to pay to for you?

I have changed how I relate to God. I am a Child of God. I am his son. I now think of God and relate to God in the same way I feel about my sons. That is a huge paradigm shift. How do you relate to God?

In the book of Matthew Jesus was asked a trick question by a lawyer. Matthew 22:36-40 says, “Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”

Jesus said the greatest commandment is to love God the Father with all our hearts, mind and soul. And then to love other people as we love ourselves. If we do not love ourselves we cannot love others or God. All of His Word stands on these two great commandments.

Your Family Tree

Are we just going to go on this toboggan ride from generation to generation and do nothing about it? Look into your families and you will see some of the same diseases, personality traits, and characteristics and relationships repeating; mothers and daughters not getting along, fathers and sons fighting with each other. Broken relationships of some kind are passed along until someone decides that is enough and breaks the cycle.

Each of you should build your own family tree. Were your family members in past generations Christians? Were they righteous or unrighteous? What were their personalities like? Were they filled with fear, hate, envy, strife, bitterness, etc? What did they do for a living? Were they into alcohol, drugs, and pornography? Did their lives contain any of the elements that we are learning are the roots for disease? Go back as many generations as you can. This will give you an idea of what is in your family.

All of the people in your family tree bring into the picture, good and evil, blessings and curses. The reason I know that is because many Christians have diseases that are genetically inherited. If it's not dealt with before the Lord, you will pass it on to your children, just as it was passed on to you.

Proverbs 22:15 says, "Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child." This means that we are all born with a sin nature or the flesh. King David said, "In sin, my mother did conceive me" (Psalms 51:5). David had a man murdered, stole his wife, lusted, tempted Israel, but he was called a man after God's own heart. David's family was a tragedy; one son raped a daughter, and one son rose up in sedition, in anarchy, against him. One son died at childbirth because of the sins of the father. But God still said that he was a man after His own heart. I hope this encourages all of us.

In Scripture, the men trace their ancestry through the father, his father and his father's father (see Matthew 1 for the ancestry of Joseph). What do your past generations have in common with you that could be considered sin? How many of you have parents that did not know God? Do you know anything about your family tree that isn't right? Did you ever hear rumors? Why not confess the sins of your family as Nehemiah and Daniel led the people?

In Scripture, the females also trace their ancestry back through the father. In Luke 3 is the genealogy of Mary, but it is traced through her husband Joseph. He was the legal son or son-in-law of Heli, having married Mary the daughter of Heli. It does not say Joseph was begotten by Heli, as it does in the case of Jacob in Matthew 1:16.

Women are not recognized in genealogies, Joseph, the legal son of Heli took the place of Mary in this genealogy of the natural line of Jesus Christ back to Adam. As is the rule of genealogies, the natural line always begins with the man himself and goes backward as far as possible. But in a royal line, as in Matthew 1, it begins at the source of the dynasty and ends with himself.

Start thinking about the desolation in the generations in your family and write down the characteristics of your family members. Were there bootleggers, pirates, warlocks, wife beaters, molesters, adulterers, fornicators, murderers, slanderers, or division makers? God did not desire these things. God did not create this mess, but we are to unravel it in the power of Jesus. He has provided a way to be free.

There may be some things that you are dealing with in your life that you inherited. We might say, "That's not fair." Well, it's not fair, Satan is never fair. But that's the price we pay for separation from God and opening ourselves to the devil and allowing him to be our father and our leader and our truth.

Proverbs 26:2 says, "As a bird by wandering and the swallow by flying so the curse causeless does not come." In spiritually rooted diseases, there is always a spiritual defect. That spiritual defect is an area of lack of sanctification.

Generational Sins and Children

Fear can be inherited, allergies can be inherited, many of the things that we deal with can either develop in our lifetime or we can inherit it from our family tree. When we see allergies, colic, asthma, fears, or weak immune systems in children we always find entry points for fear, rejection and abandonment.

Some of the most common entry points are, parents who were not ready to have a child and reject or do not bless the child in the womb, born or conceived out of marriage, arguing or fighting in the home, cigarette, alcohol or drug use, wrong sex, divorce, not excited about the coming baby (i.e., cool or ambivalent), workaholic parents; death of a parent or divorce and many other similar circumstances (Verny 1981).

As you will notice many of these entry points even begin when the baby is in the womb. A study of prenatal psychology reveals many ways that a child's genetic make up and neuro-pathways are determined by experiences in the womb. I strongly recommend that you read Dr. Verny's book, *The Secret Life of The Unborn Child* for more information on prenatal experiences.

If the parent or parents will repent for how fear, rejection or abandonment enter into their child, they are almost always instantly healed. When the curse is broken by the parent it is an amazing thing to see God's provision for children that are not yet at the age of understanding. Older children will also need to forgive and repent for their anger and unforgiveness. The Bible says that the children are sanctified by the believing parents (I Cor. 7:14).

God's Answer—Repentance and Forgiveness

Romans 12:2 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." We are conformed to this world in our sins. We are in bondage to the god of this world in each way we sin. But God has given us a way to renew our mind, our conscious, our will, and our emotions so they can line up with His will and purpose.

Hebrews 9:14 puts it this way, "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" The power of the blood of Jesus will cleanse our mind, will and emotions of all our dead works or sins and will purge our conscience, from all the old ways of thinking.

When our minds or consciences are purged or cleansed of all the negative experiences, the emotional pain is gone. This is a spiritual miracle that is available to us through the blood of Jesus. But there is more. When we choose to forgive and repent,

thus allowing His blood to cleanse us, we also receive a physical miracle. In neurobiological terms God renews our mind or purges our conscious by creating new neuro-pathways and our genes learn to express themselves in new and different ways. We actually physically receive new neuro-pathways and our genes learn to express themselves in new and different ways.

Experts have long argued the question: “Is it heredity or experience that shapes who we are?” Daniel J. Siegel, MD., in his book *The Developing Mind* teaches that the structure and function of the developing brain are determined by how experiences, especially our earliest interpersonal relationships, shape the genetically directed maturation of the nervous system.

Dr. Siegel received his medical degree from Harvard University and completed his postgraduate medical education at the University of California, Los Angeles, with training in pediatrics, general adult psychiatry, and child and adolescent psychiatry. He has served as a National Institute of Mental Health Research Fellow at UCLA. Dr. Siegel formerly directed the UCLA training program in child psychiatry and is currently the medical director of the Infant and Preschool Service at UCLA and associate clinical professor of psychiatry at the UCLA School of Medicine.

Dr. Siegel says, “recent findings in neural science show that interaction with the environment, especially relationships with other people, directly shape the development of the brain’s structure and function.”

Our experiences alter both the activity and the structure of the connections between neurons and directly shape the circuits responsible for such processes as memory, emotion, and self-awareness. We can use an understanding of the impact of experience on the mind to deepen our grasp of how the past continues to shape present experience and influence future actions. In other words, human connections shape the neural connections from which the mind emerges. The mind is defined as the human soul, the psyche, the intellect, the will, and emotions (Siegel 1999).

Experience early in life may be especially crucial in organizing the way the basic structures of the brain develop. For example, traumatic experiences at the beginning of life may have more profound effects on the “deeper” structures of the brain, which are responsible for basic regulatory capacities and enable the mind to respond later to stress. Thus we see that abused children have elevated stress hormone levels (Siegel 1999).

More common everyday experiences also shape brain structure. The brain’s development is an experience-dependent process, in which experience activates certain pathways in the brain, strengthening existing connections and creating new ones. Lack of experience can lead to cell death in a process called “pruning.” In other words “we use it or lose it” (Siegel 1999).

An infant is born with genetically programmed excess in neurons. Both genes and experience determine the growth and development of these neurons and the synaptic connections. Genes contain the information for the general organization of the brain’s structure, but experience determines which genes are expressed, and how, and when. Early in life, interpersonal relationships are a primary source of the experience that shapes how genes express themselves within the brain (Siegel 1999). This experience begins at conception. Experiences can shape not only what information enters the mind, but also the way in which the mind develops the ability to process that information, how

we will react to situations containing similar triggers, and our concept of who we are, and what we expect from future relationships.

The misinterpretations of genetic studies have led to beliefs such as “What parents do have no effect on their children’s development.” A wide range of studies have now clarified that human growth and development are products of the effects of experience on the genetic potential (Siegel 1999, Benedersky 1994, Coe 1992, Goldsmith 1997, Kendler 1986, Roseblum 1994, Ruter 1997, Gunnar 1992, Teicher 1997, Rakic 1994).

Genes have two major functions. First, they act as templates for information that is to be passed on to the next generation. Second, they have a transcription function. Transcription is directly influenced by experience. In other words, experience determines which genes will express via the process of protein synthesis (Kandel 1998, Siegel 1999). It is fascinating to learn that even our genes are not isolated from our experiences. In reality the first function of our genes, mentioned above, is the product of the experiences of our ancestors. So even what we inherit is affected by experiences.

I hope you are getting a picture of how important our experiences are. But we must always remember we are responsible for how we choose to react to the experiences of life. We have a choice to respond in anger or forgiveness. As adults we also have a choice in how we deal with our experiences in childhood. We can never blame our problems on others. The good news is that our genes are “plastic” and can be molded or changed through our lives (Siegel 1999). Positive responses to negative experiences can change genetics.

Our brains are living organisms or systems that are open and dynamic. In other words, how we choose to react to our experiences throughout our lives will influence our brain and our mind and thus our continued growth and development. How we choose to respond or react to an experience also affects our physical and mental health.

When we chose to allow the blood of Jesus to purge our conscience of all the dead works (Hebrew 9:14) then our experience changes and we receive not only a spiritual miracle but also a physical miracle. As we forgive we receive new neuro-pathways and our genetic expression also changes.

The brain is also functionally and physically linked to other systems in the body, thereby affecting, controlling or regulating many other systems, including the immune and endocrine systems. For more information on this topic please read *In His Own Image*.

Practical Applications—Creating New Generations

God has answers! We do not have to live in or accept the results of sin in our lives. Through the power of Jesus, people and families can and do change if we will do what He teaches. God’s answer that creates new generations is in three parts. We must be restored to God the Father, others and ourselves. In Matthew 22:37-41 teaches that the most important commandment is to love God the Father with all our heart mind and soul He also says that the second most important commandment, which like unto the first, is to love our neighbors as we love our selves. What Jesus is teaching is that life is all about relationships. Does this surprise you after what we have just studied? Let’s look at each of these individually.

God the Father

God the Father is love. He loved us so much that He sent His only Son to pay the price for our sin. Jesus said that if you have seen me you have seen the Father. He also that I and the Father are one. Our understanding of who God the Father is, should and must be formed by who Jesus is and what He did. If it is not then we have fallen into a trap set by the devil.

If we are angry or blaming God in any way we are in sin. We must repent for any way that we have done this so we can be restored to Him.

Ourselves

Jesus said that we are to love others as our selves. Thus, answer in your generations begins with you. We must learn to forgive to change our old ways of thinking. It is our goal to duplicate the ministry of Jesus. In John 20:21 Jesus sends His disciples with the same impartation of power and the fullness of the Spirit that the Father gave to Him. Jesus taught repentance cast out demons and healed the sick and this is what we are to do today in His power.

The Blood of Jesus is available for the total and final payment for all of our sins past, present and future. ***If we meet these three conditions:***

1. We must accept Jesus as the Christ and allow Him to be our LORD and Savior. John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The first step is to become His sons and daughters. This first condition is a salvation issue. We do not believe that the next two are. We believe that all unconfessed sin, sin that we have not judged ourselves for, will be dealt with at the judgment seat of Christ where all believers will stand.
2. If we do not forgive others and our selves, our Heavenly Father will not forgive us. Matthew 6:14-15 says, "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." There are many other passages that teach the same message. The story of the rich man in Matthew 18; the many references that teach that in the manner or way that we judge others is the manner or way that we will be judged. Even the Lord's prayer teaches us to ask our Heavenly Father to forgive us in the manner that we forgive.
3. We must confess our sins, past, present and future. 1 John 1:9 says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness". What happens if we do not confess? James 5:16 says, "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." When we do not confess our sin, the guilt, shame, regret, sadness, anger, hatred, bitterness etc. it is still in the memory and we are in bondage and held captive by those memories and the pain. If all of our past, present, and future sins were automatically forgiven when we accept Jesus why would these verses be written to believers and why would the bondage and pain still be there?

In the Old Testament, the blood of bulls and goats covered the sin until the cross. The Old Testament saint had to perform the sacrifice. The New Testament saint must apply the sacrifice, the blood of Jesus through forgiveness and repentance. We must do our part, Jesus did His.

The shed blood of Jesus cleanses us from sin if we forgive and confess our sins, but does not remove the power of the sin and death nor the bondage that the sin brings into our lives. The blood pays the price but it is the power of His resurrection, the power of His Name, that gives us victory over the works of the devil; the sorrow, guilt, shame, regret, sadness, anger, hatred, bitterness, etc. and death.

James 4:7 says, “Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.” There are three distinct parts to this verse.

1. “Submit yourselves therefore to God.” We do this by doing points 1-3 above. We purpose and choose to do what He tells us to do. **If** we obey then we will receive His blessings, **but if** we do not then we will reap what we sow.
2. “Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.” This is part of the responsibility that we have as sons of God, and our authority to do this comes because He is risen. All power was given to Jesus and he conquered all the works of the devil when the Father raised Him from the dead. Then Jesus told us to go into the entire world and teach, baptize, cast out demons, and heal the sick in His Name. Mark 16:16-18: *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.* Jesus gave us His power of attorney.
3. “And he will flee from you.” **If** we exercise the authority that we have been given by our risen Lord and Savior, then His power makes the devil flee. But we are responsible for exercising our authority by speaking the words that rebuke the devil. **If** we speak, then God will make the devil flee, but **if** we do not then the devil will not flee.

After we have confessed our sin, forgiven others and ourselves, then **if** we command in the Name of Jesus the shame, guilt, sadness, bitterness, anger, self-hatred, jealousy envy, rejection, fear, the occult, etc. to leave us they will. This is how we have power over the devil. This is how we destroy the works of the devil in our lives.

If we will submit to God James 4:8 tells us what will result. James 4:8 says, “Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.” We draw nigh to God when we cleanse our hands, and purify our hearts. And when we do this He is always there. God is a responder to us. If we obey, God is always faithful to do His part. When we draw nigh to God we remove from our lives the “stuff”, the sins, that have separated us from Him.

The result is that we can walk and talk with God in the cool of the day just like Adam and Eve did. Only our sin separates us from Him, others and ourselves. In this process we are also set free of the “stuff”, that has separated us from others. We find that marriages, organizations, and relationships are healed. We also find that we become our own best friends.

In Matthew 22 Jesus was asked a question by a lawyer, Matthew 22:36-40 says, “Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt

love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”

Jesus is commanding us to love our neighbors as our self. Thus, we must love ourselves or we cannot love our neighbor or God the Father. This is why the process of healing our generations begins with each of us. We must be fully restored to God the Father, others and ourselves.

Others

As we learn to love and respect our selves then we can reach out in His power to love and help others. Isaiah 58 lays out God’s plan for what the true fast is. It is a fast of helping others.

How do we reach out to others? First we must realize that we are not the Holy Spirit. We must realize that we cannot convict anyone. If we try we will only create an offense. So our efforts to help our family and others must begin in prayer. We call this indirect.

- **Indirect**

- 1) Pray, Pray, Pray!

- A) Intercession

- a) Intercede on behalf of your loved one and others (see booklet *Intercessory Prayer*)

- B) Consecrate

- b) Your child to the Lord

- (1) Teach who they are as an individual (Romans 7)

- (2) Teach who they are in Christ...

- c) Give God full control of your child’s life

- (1) Wait for God/Holy Spirit to give you direction and guidance regarding your child’s life or that of another.

- C) Accountability

- a) Husband/Wife toward one another

- b) Enlisting Other Parents

- (1) Praying for each others children

- (2) Further Parenting Skills

- **Direct**

- 1) Approach/Interaction with the child or others

- A) Confession/Repentance/Forgiveness...

- a) Of wrong doing (sin) on parent’s behalf or others. Of possible do this face to face, but sometimes this can only be done through a phone call or a letter. The important thing is to do it.

- b) Of wrong-doing (sin) on the generation’s behalf

- B) Accountability
 - a) Being vulnerable to child
 - (1) What have I done? Listen to them and be willing to repent even if you disagree with their memory. Do not try to change their perception, just ask for forgiveness.
 - (2) Tell me when I...
- C) Blessing (Initial)
 - a) Mother's Blessing
 - b) Father's Blessing
- D) Blessing(s) (on-going)
 - a) Daily
 - b) Weekly
 - c) Monthly
 - d) Yearly
 - e) Special Occasions
 - (1) Birthday
 - (2) Graduation
 - (3) Baptism
 - (4) Dating
 - (5) Engagement/Marriage
 - (6) Birth of a child
 - (7) Celebrations
 - (8) Just Because...
- E) Application in Persons life
 - a) Examine issues/wrong-doing toward others
 - b) Coach/Mentor/Assist child or others
 - (1) Toward Self
 - (2) Toward Others
- F) Open Door Policy
 - a) Providing a means in which the child or other person feels safe in sharing
 - b) Extending an invitation to "lay the cards on the table"
- G) Praise the Child
 - a) Honesty
 - b) Openness and willingness to forgive and deal with issues
 - c) Minimize passing judgment
- H) Expression of Affections
 - a) Telling them
 - b) Showing them
 - c) Boasting to others about them
- I) ACTIVELY Involved in the Child's Life
 - a) Spiritually
 - b) Spiritual guidance—be a role model
 - c) School
 - d) Extra curricula activities
 - e) Friendships

J) Traditions

a) Old

(1) Understanding family traditions. Teach your children the good things about your family

(2) Breaking old traditions. Repent for the sin of the past.

b) New

(9) Establish new family traditions that can be remembered positively

K) Serving Together

a) Ministry toward others. Teach the importance of helping others.

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