

## Preparing the Generation to Come Psalm 78

### Introduction:

1. In Psalm 78, the psalmist discusses the incredible importance of training our children. Twice he uses the phrase, "*the generation to come.*" vs. 4, 6
2. I've heard it said, "Christianity is but one generation from extinction."
3. If parents and grandparents do not take seriously God's command in **Proverbs 22:6** to "*train up our children in the way they should go*", then how can we expect the next generation to hold to and perpetuate Biblical truth?
4. Webster's defines the word "train" as: A) to direct the growth of; B) to form by instruction, discipline; C) to teach so as to make fit or qualified; D) to make prepared.
5. This is our job! To prepare the generation to come to love God, serve God, worship God, and obey God.
6. How can we properly prepare the generation to come? Let's look in Psalm 78 and discover God's plan.

### First, by accepting our responsibility. vs. 5

1. This is the first step. We must take personal responsibility. If everyone assumes someone else is doing it, it won't get done.
  - **Illustration:** Telling all three of my boys to do something - this is a great way to insure that it doesn't get done.
2. Verse 5 places the responsibility for training the children square on the shoulders of the fathers. This coincides with what Paul told the church-age saints today.  
**Ephesians 6:4**
3. Too many fathers today are abandoning their God-given responsibility. They are pawning it off on mom, or the Sunday School teacher, or the school teacher, or the AWANA club leader, or the youth director.
4. The local church should simply be supplementing the training we are giving our children at home, not replacing it! **Illustration:** vitamin supplements don't replace food.
5. Parents: **Ephesians 6:4** indicates that we should have a proactive plan for training our children. Too many parents are reactive.
6. Remember, our goal is not to simply raise good kids, but godly children.

### Second, by teaching our children the truth of God. vs. 5-6

1. God told the fathers of Israel to teach their children God's law so that the generation to come would know it, and could in turn teach it to their children. **Isaiah 38:19**
2. This verse reminds me of **2 Timothy 2:2** when Paul told Timothy to take the things that he had learned from Paul (his spiritual father), teach them to faithful men who would then in turn teach others.
  - In both of these passages we see four generations of people receiving God's truth.

3. There is absolutely no way to train up godly, spiritual children apart from God's Word. Timothy is a wonderful example of this. We learn in **2 Timothy 1:5** that Timothy was at least a third generation strong, committed believer.
4. But, in **2 Timothy 3:15** we learn why this was so. From childhood he had been taught God's Word. Paul said that the Scriptures are able to "*make thee wise.*"
5. Do you desire for your children to make wise choices as they grow into their teen years and into adulthood? Spend the time right now teaching and instructing them from God's Word. Is it a time investment? Absolutely, but one you will not regret!

### **Third, by showing our children the truth of God. vs. 4**

1. The key word in verse 4 is "showing."
2. The truth that we teach our children should be seen in our daily life. It is a powerful testimony when our children see us living out what we are teaching.
  - It is one thing to teach them to pray, but how powerful for them to actually see and hear you praying.
  - It is one thing to tell them to be honest, but how powerful when they see you displaying honesty in your daily life.
  - You've heard, "A picture is worth a thousand words."
3. I remember from my Junior Church days that kids love object lessons. Parents, we are a living, daily object lesson that our kids learn from. They learn how to live the Christian life by watching us.
4. Look at verse 4. We teach our kids:
  - How to praise the Lord.
  - How to rely on God's strength daily.
  - How to recognize God's wonderful works.
5. Our life is an open book to our children. What are they reading?

### **Fourth, by using the past as a teaching tool. vs. 8**

1. The psalmist encourages Israel to use the past as a teaching tool to instruct their children. The rest of this psalm is dedicated to this. Why would he do this? It is for the purpose of their children learning from past mistakes and not making the same ones.
2. While we are not to dwell on the past, we are to learn from the past.  
**1 Corinthians 10:6-11**
3. Parents, talk to your kids honestly about some of your past mistakes and failures. Utilize those events as a tool to teach and warn your children. Did you know your kids love to hear stories from your past? They eat it up. They want to know you.

### **In Conclusion:**

1. Psalm 78 provides for us a practical and workable plan for preparing the generation to come.
2. The purpose is three-fold and is found in verse 7:  
*"That they might set their hope in God"*  
*"And not forget the works of God"*  
*"But keep his commandments"*
3. Parents: let's prepare the generation to come!