

A Father's Influence

(Psalm 112:1-10)

Introduction

A) In recent weeks, one teacher told of a student that was in early late elementary or early middle school that was very explicit with his language and extensive in his description of human anatomy. After further investigation, he likely was viewed pornography on a daily basis.

B) A while back, one school had a sixth-grader that was 14 year old. Teachers were beginning to wonder if the district would be required to provide student parking for him at the middle school, if he finished.

C) To balance the picture, there are hundreds of high achieving, high-functional kids in our society as well.

D) What makes the difference? What is the key?

C) Contextualize Psalm 112.

(In personal worlds touched by violence, relational and economic hardship, greed and unfulfilled desires, this psalm offers people an alternative. It is as if the psalmist is offering something to which a person might cling as a life jacket of hope.)

I. The Heart of The Righteous (v.1)

(The righteous are people who have put their trust in Christ in order to be in relationship with God. The term has nothing to do with man's efforts, but results from the work of grace in the heart.)

A) Fears the Lord

This concept of "fearing" the Lord is to some extent lost in our modern society. Fear is known almost

exclusively as a negative thing and is linked to images of abused power and distrust.

However in the translation from the Hebrew that is not what it means at all, many translations use the word 'reverence', 'in awe of' or 'respect'... We find this word translated as love in Dueteronomy 10 verse 12:

*“And now, O Israel, what does the Lord your God ask of you but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all his ways, to **love** him, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your Soul.”*

And later in verse 20 it is translated:

*“**Hold Fast to** the Lord”, or in another translation: “**Cling to** the Lord.”*

This kind of fear does not refer to cowering or fleeing, but rather it is a deep knowledge of the magnificence and greatness and supremacy of God, and responding to that with the correct reverence, awe and love.

B) Delights in His Commands

II. The Hope of The Righteous

A) Blessed children (v. 2)

One commentator said of verse 2, “If anyone wishes to leave behind him flourishing prosperity, let them not think along the lines of storing up hoards of gold and silver. Rather let him rightly recognize and serve God and entrust his children to Christ’s guardianship and protection.

Another quote reads “To be honest, the real reason it’s so hard to bring up children right is that they insist on imitating their parents.”

The power of influence. Richard Dugdale is credited with research of the descent of two men that lived during the 1700s to determine what happened to their descendants.

Firstly, Max Juke (an alias): Born 1700. He lived as a backwoodsman. He is described as 'a hunter and fisher, a hard drinker, jolly and companionable, averse to steady toil,' working hard by spurts and idling by turns, becoming blind in his old age. He had a numerous children, some of them almost certainly illegitimate." There was a huge amount of intermarrying and incest which happened within his family.

Of his estimated 1200 descendants: 280 died as paupers, 140 were known criminals, 130 went to jail – 7 for murder, more than 128 became prostitutes, 142 lived off state aid, 60 became thieves, 20 became tradesmen, 10 of whom learned their trade in prison, 300 died very young.

Secondly, Jonathon Edwards: Born 1703, A man of God and married a woman of like character. On their wedding night they committed their marriage to the Lord. Their descendants included: "practically no lawbreakers", more than 100 lawyers, 30 judges, 13 college presidents, and hundred and more professors, sixty physicians, 100 clergymen, missionaries, and theological professors, 80 elected to public office, including 3 mayors, 3 governors, several members of congress, 3 senators, and 1 vice president (Aaron Burr), 60 have attained prominence in authorship or editorial life, with 135 books of merit, 75 army or navy officers

How to explain this? Yes, Jonathan Edwards was very godly. But he was also uncommonly hard-working, intelligent, and moral. And the research says about his wife, "Much of the capacity and talent, intensity and character of the more than 1,400 of the Edwards family are due to Mrs. Edwards."

B) Riches (v. 3)

Some things are more valuable than money! Those true riches.

C) Light (v. 4)

Light is often used to represent the presence of God.

III. The Honor of the Righteous

A) Good (v. 5)

B) Victory (v. 6-8)

C) Reputation (v.9)

Conclusion

What's the answer to raising Godly kids in a broken world. It's simply but not simplistic. Fear God and delight in His commands!!