

Taking Care of Our Families "What Have They Seen In Your House?"

Intro: You probably remember that during the days of good king Hezekiah, he fell mortally ill and the prophet Isaiah declared that he should "set his house in order" for his life was coming to an end. However, Hezekiah humbly turned to the Lord for healing; and God answered him with fifteen more years of life. In response to his healing, Merodach Baladan, king of Babylon, sent emissaries with a gift and a word of congratulations to the Israelite king.

However Hezekiah, in what was a time of prideful weakness, injudiciously showed his Babylonian visitors all the treasures of his house. Perhaps he was flattered that the Babylonian king at last recognized him as a notable king by sending him ambassadors and gifts.

But Isaiah the prophet had serious reservations about those Babylonian visitors and came to Hezekiah with a concerned question, "What have they seen in your house?" And Hezekiah answered essentially, "I have shown them everything." That was a big mistake! Hezekiah had been too trusting with an enemy of Israel; and Isaiah pronounced that those very things which he had shown to the Babylonians would one day motivate them to return with their armies and attack Jerusalem in order to take away those treasures along with the people into captivity.

There's a good lesson in that story about vanity; and how it can make us imperceptible to real danger; but today I want to focus on Isaiah's question, "What have they seen in your house?" It might well be a question we all need to answer, especially as we think about our children and the need to model for them the right values and priorities in our homes each day.

So in our family lesson today I want to ask you, "What have they seen in your house?"

Have they seen you:

Praying regularly to God?

Our children need to see that we truly depend upon God for all that we have and that we are thankful for it. Every time it is mentioned that Jesus took bread, he is also described as giving thanks or offering a blessing to God.

Jesus therefore took the loaves; and having given thanks, He distributed to those who were seated; (John 6:11)

What have they seen in your house?

Do they see you pray before each meal?

Do they see you pray for God's help in time of problems and need?

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. (Phil. 4:6)
Do they see you pray about important decisions?

Doing serious Bible study?

Our children need to see that the word of God is important to us--that we take seriously the need to feed upon it day by day.

And He humbled you and let you be hungry, and fed you with manna which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that He might make you understand that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord. (Deut. 8:3)

What have they seen in your house?

Do they see you preparing your next Bible class? Reading the text, working on your lesson so that you can be prepared to participate and get the most from the study?

Do they see you carrying out a daily Bible reading program that will help you grow in your knowledge of the Scriptures?

Putting the service of God over all other things?

Our children need to know how important serving God is to us. Is it as important as other secular activities? Obeying God should be our first priority. Jesus taught us so:

But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you. (Matthew 6:33)

What have they seen in your house?

Have they seen you choose to go to a ball game or social event rather than go to worship?

Have they seen you watch a TV show you wanted to see rather than meet with the saints?

Demonstrating genuine love for your mate?

Our marriages give our children their first glimpse into what a close relationship between a husband and wife should be. We are taught to show our love and affection to one another.

*Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her; (Eph. 5:25)
that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, (Tit. 2:4)*

What have they seen in your house?

Have they seen you show appropriate affection before them?

Have they seen you honor your mate with words of appreciation for their contributions to family life?

Have they seen you remember special times like anniversaries and birthdays?

Solving differences with love and compromise?

Of course, the melding of two people in marriage may create occasions for conflict, especially with all the stresses of providing a living, dealing with problems outside the home, and the differences of opinion that may arise from time to time.

When there is conflict we are taught to work together for solutions and make right things that are wrong. Jesus made reconciliation a prerequisite for acceptable worship:

If therefore you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar, and go your way; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering. (Matthew 5:23-24)

What have they seen in your house?

Have they seen you be willing to honor the point of view of your mate?

Have they seen you be willing to bend or yield to please your mate?

Can they communicate freely with you and feel safe?

Expressing support for those who teach God's word?

Home life often gives our children their first glimpse into who they should value. And surely we should express before them our love and appreciation for those who serve them spiritually.

But we request of you, brethren, that you appreciate those who diligently labor among you, and have charge over you in the Lord and give you instruction, (1 Thes. 5:12)

What have they seen in your house?

Have they heard you express appreciation for those who have taught you and for what they have taught you?

Would they be encouraged to listen to those who teach and obey them as they teach the word of God? (You may really wish for that some day; help make it happen by your example.)

Showing interest in the needs of others?

One aspect of our home life should be to make our children aware of how blessed they are and to feel compassion for those who have suffered through no fault of their own. Life presents many cruel hardship to people, many of whom are our brethren in the Lord.

The Lord teaches us to show our love for them by helping them in their time of need.

But whoever has the world's goods, and beholds his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him? (1 John 3:17)

What have they seen in your house?

Have they seen you send financial help to someone in need?

Have they seen you visit the sick or support the bereaved?

Being good stewards of what God has given you?

One of the important values our children learn from watching us is the value we place on things like our health and finances. Surely these should be seen as gifts of God that require good stewardship.

In this case, moreover, it is required of stewards that one be found trustworthy. (1 Cor. 4:2)

What have they seen in your house?

Do they see an attitude of stewardship with finances? Is there waste and reckless spending? Are there a balance between taking care of present needs and saving for future needs?

Do they see healthy eating that shows appreciation for the human body and the need to take care of it?

Are they required to act with good stewardship also in such matters?

Living with purity in your moral life?

As Christians, it is not hard to present a holy demeanor to those who see you infrequently at the church building, but it is a far more challenging task to present that holiness in day to day life. It is an essential part of our calling as disciples:

Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. (2 Cor. 7:1)

What have they seen in your house?

Have they seen you turn off the TV or change the channel when something salacious appears?

Have they seen you honor God with your speech and refrain from course jesting or irreverent uses of God's name?

Have they seen you speak kindly of others and refrain from gossip or slander?

Conclusion: What our children see in our house is likely what we may some day see in theirs! show them a way of life that they will remember as God-honoring and Scriptural.