

Freedom FOCUS

“...to turn them
from darkness
to light...”

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NEWSLETTER

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Having a Multi-Generational Vision for Your Family

“Blessed is everyone who fears the LORD, who walks in his ways! You shall eat the fruit of the labor of your hands; you shall be blessed, and it shall be well with you. Your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your house; your children will be like olive shoots around your table. Behold, thus shall the man be blessed who fears the LORD. The LORD bless you from Zion! May you see the prosperity of Jerusalem all the days of your life! May you see your children’s children! Peace be upon Israel! (Psalm 128:1-6)

When presented with the Biblical teaching of multi-generational vision, most people—even Christians—in our society today are unaware of its true meaning. Although the Bible speaks clearly about the blessings and curses which are passed down through the generations, these teachings have been all but forgotten among Christians today.

One reason these truths have been lost in our culture is the lack of Biblical teaching and godly examples in the home. Many Christians today are first-generation believers who were not raised by God-fearing parents. Others grew up in nominally Christian homes where having a saving faith in Jesus Christ and a living, vibrant relationship with God were not emphasized.

A second reason for the undermining of a generational vision is the absence of the father in so many American homes. David Blankenhorn, author of *Fatherless America*, writes, “*The fatherless family in the United States in the late twentieth century is a social invention of the most daring and untested design. It represents a radical departure from virtually all human history and experience. In the past 200 years fathers have gradually moved from the center to the periphery of family life.*”

The trend in our country for the past 150 years has been to shift the responsibility for training the next generation away from the father and over the government, church, and private institutions. David Blankenhorn remarks of the twentieth century, “*For the first time in history, children were being shaped primarily outside the tutelage of their fathers. Two hundred years ago it was unthinkable, except among the very wealthy, that a child would be educated upon another knee than the father.*”



Judges 2:10 highlights the severe consequences of losing a multi-generational family vision. “*And all that generation also were gathered to their fathers. And there arose another generation after them who did not know the LORD or the work that he had done for Israel.*”

In order to regain a Biblical perspective on a generational vision, we must first understand what God has on His heart for our families. In Deuteronomy 6:1-25, God reveals His reason for teaching us His Law: that both we and our descendants would fear Him, keep His commandments, and live long. His desire is that future generations would experience His blessing as they obey His Law. However, His end goal is not outward conformity, but that both we and the generations to follow would love Him with all our hearts.

Keeping this foundation in mind, let us examine some further Biblical motivations for having a generational family vision.

1. It is God’s design for the family—it is His perspective. (Deuteronomy 6, 7)
2. God makes covenants with generations. (Adam, Noah, Abraham, etc.)
3. God desires godly seed; it is part of His plan for evangelism. (Malachi 2:14,15)
4. God cleanses the bloodline of His people. (Numbers 14:17-19)
5. God turns the hearts of father to their children. (Malachi 4:2-6)
6. We are to be sent out as shining lights in this world. (Philippians 2:13-16)

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Having a Multi-Generational Vision for Your Family (cont.)

How can we put the concept of generational vision into practice in our families? First, we need to redeem the time we have in this life and use it to build into future generations. (Psalm 90:9-17) Second, those of us who are fathers must be men of conviction, living our lives according to God's core values in all our relationships. The impact of instilling a generational vision in our families will be used by God to turn the hearts of our children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and beyond toward Himself! "Therefore know that the Lord your God, He is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a

thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments; and He repays those who hate Him to their face, to destroy them." (Deut. 7:9)

Rev. Jeff Pokone

For more information on this subject, we invite you to download Rev. Pokone's message entitled *Having a Multi-Generational Vision*, available at www.indianabcc.com/family_series.htm.

Testimony: In the Heart of a Child



In the deepest recesses of my soul, a memory has lain hidden since elementary school. It was an event so overwhelming that I buried it deep inside, unable to understand or process or even *think* about what had happened. At the time, I believed I had done something terribly wrong, and I could not speak of it to anyone. Over time I had buried it and forgotten about it—but the repercussions of this long-forgotten event were profound and far-reaching.

As far back as I can remember, I have been gripped by raw emotions that I could not even articulate, far less master. Years of introspection and therapy enabled me to burrow into the recesses of my soul, but I could only get so far. Like peeling back the layers of an onion, I found that beneath years of accelerated living as an adult were anger and anxiety; and beneath that was a paralyzing, controlling, overwhelming *fear* which seemed to have consumed the very core of my entire being. Why, I often asked, did I have such a restless heart?

The answer came to me unexpectedly during a recent counseling session. The counselor asked if I'd ever experienced any kind of childhood trauma. I truthfully answered, "Not that I know of," and soon became so agitated that I could not sit still. I blurted out, "I need to get out of here," and literally ran from the building. It took about thirty minutes for me to get control of myself again and go back inside, but even then, I could not explain why I became so agitated. During the subsequent sessions, as well as prayerfully seeking answers during the months that followed, the answer finally came: *I was molested in elementary school by a group of older kids.*

While I still do not recall every detail of what happened, I do know that I was about six or seven years old. I was with a group of older boys and girls behind a tree at the edge of the school property during recess. I very strongly did *not* want to be there, but I was being physically restrained and forced to participate in something that I did not want to do. It was a kind of "show me yours and I'll show you mine" game. My tears and cries and struggles to escape made me feel powerless, and their mocking

laughter and kisses on my face and head were humiliating. Suddenly they were gone, and I stood alone, still in tears.

In the following days and weeks, teachers and students stared at me with a mixture of fear and pity, talking in whispered tones. I'm not sure how it became known, but I recall hanging my head in fear and shame. For the rest of my elementary school years, I played with the girls at recess instead of the boys, because I felt that somehow I had more in common with the girls. Although I knew physiologically that I was a male, the belief that I was not a "normal" boy took hold.

Since that revelation came to me, I've tried to let the words sink in and to absorb their meaning: *I was molested as a child.* In hindsight, schoolyard "show me" games are not uncommon, but I was unable to handle it at the time, and thus my reaction was traumatizing. Even now I am still stunned by the revelation, and yet relieved at the same time. *This explains everything*, I think to myself. The painful shyness throughout elementary school. The thoughts of suicide and the internalization of the "faggot" label imposed on me by school peers. The promiscuity of my post-college years, followed by alcoholism and drug use. The inability to connect emotionally and the resulting loneliness and isolation. The voices inside telling me that there was no hope. The pervasive anger and fear and anxiety that distorted literally everything in my life. The clinical depression, the controlling cigarette addiction, and on and on. *It all makes sense now.*

On an even deeper level, the spiritual battle we face also makes more sense to me now. That trauma of my youth provided an opening through which hostile spirits entered. The Scriptures tell us that the devil roams about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he might devour. The embarrassment and hurt and sense of violation I experienced as a child, which I was unable to process, became an aching, unfulfilled need that would haunt me from that day forward.

A new life begins for me—at age 43! I praise God that he provides the strength and endurance for me to run the race he has set before me. And my wife and I praise God that our dear friends Bob and Barbara referred me to IBCC, where we met Ron, one of their interns—and where the LORD opened my eyes to a truth that I had been unable to see on my own.