

HOW OUR CHILDREN COME TO FAITH

by Stephen Smallman

TO THE READER: A good learning technique is to answer the following questions BEFORE reading the booklet. After reading, you can refine your answers based on your reading. Then, when your group gathers, each can discuss his or her view and you can either affirm or modify what you wrote.

Here is one of the most important questions most Christians (and even denominations) have to answer: How do you view the spiritual condition of your children and how will that determine how you raise them?

1. Describe your upbringing and family. What kind of spiritual training did you get. What difference did it make?
2. A covenant relationship requires two parties working in agreement. Our part is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever. But what is HIS part of the agreement? And, what is HIS commitment to our children? (5-8)
3. At this point the question must be asked: What is YOUR commitment to the spiritual upbringing of your child(ren)? How much time and effort are you willing to put into their spiritual education?
4. Jesus said about our children, "the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." (Matt.19:15) How, then, should you be praying for your children? (8-11)
5. What should follow, or accompany, these prayers? (10)
6. How do you understand God's part of the covenant after reading Genesis 17:7 and Deuteronomy 7:8-9? (11-13)
7. Read Genesis 17:4. Wasn't this covenant made only to the nation of Israel?

8. Where should we rest our confidence when it comes to raising our children in the Lord? (13-15)

9. Did circumcision save Abraham's son Isaac? (17-19)

10. What is the difference between regeneration and conversion? (17-19)

11. Do our covenant children need to make a separate "profession of faith" sometime after they reach a certain age? (20-23)

12. When should your child confess, or affirm, his or her faith? (24-25)

After going through these questions, read the text and fill in the answers in preparation for class, noting other questions you might have. [By the way, if you do have any other questions about what you read, write them down here so you remember them at class time.]

APPLICATION

Families – What are you doing to bring up your child(ren) to know the Lord, other than just Sunday School (as important as that is)? If you need help with this, ask the elders of your church.

Church – Do you have a practice of helping parents know how to raise their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord? If not, after reading this material, make a plan, or you could possibly lose these children.

For Further Study

Understanding the Faith. Stephen Smallman. P&R Publishing, 2001.

Beginnings: Understanding How We Experience the New Birth, Stephen Smallman. P&R, 2015.

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