

Application: Our Children in God's Eyes

Gn 17¹ When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, “I am Almighty God; walk before Me and be blameless. ... ⁷ And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and your descendants after you. ...

¹¹ [A]nd you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and you. ¹² He who is eight days old among you shall be circumcised, every male child in your generations ...

► We want to pause for some application re how God views and works with our _____, and about the New Covenant sign of baptism.

► The practice of our church and denomination is to honor the conviction of the _____.

► In Ezekiel 16, God refers to his people's children as “_____ children” (21) “whom you had borne to Me” (20).

Eze 16²⁰ “[Y]ou took your sons and daughters whom you had borne to Me and sacrificed them to idols to be devoured. ... ²¹ You slaughtered My children and offered them up to idols by causing them to pass through the fire.” (NASB)

► Per Psalm 139, _____ covered our children in the womb and formed their inward parts.

Ps 139¹³ You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb.

► The majority of Christian parents with a newborn child instinctively believe –

– that _____ gave them that newborn;

– that He _____ the child to them to be raised up to believe God's word, to love Him, and to walk with Him;

– and so they will teach the child to _____ to God, to _____ His word, and to confess their _____;

– and since all of this is very important, it ought to be formally _____ as soon as possible.

► These instincts are biblically _____, but we get confused about baptism, because we assume that –

1) baptism is a person's _____ about their personal faith and decision to follow Christ; and

2) circumcision was about _____ things – inclusion in God's OT people and inheriting His land promises.

► But the NT tells us that at its heart, circumcision was a sign and seal of righteousness by _____, and further that God's promises of seed and land were ultimately about _____ inheriting the world, and us sharing in the same by faith.

Rm 4¹¹ [Abraham] received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while still uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all those who believe, though they are uncircumcised, that righteousness might be imputed to them also, ¹² and the father of circumcision to those who not only are of the circumcision, but who also walk in the steps of the faith which our father Abraham had while still uncircumcised. ¹³ For the promise that he would be the heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.

Gal 3⁸ And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, "In you all the nations shall be blessed."⁹ So then those who are of faith are blessed with believing Abraham. ...¹⁶ Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "And to your Seed," who is Christ. ...²⁹ And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Rm 11¹⁷ And if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them became a partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree,¹⁸ do not boast against the branches. But if you do boast, remember that you do not support the root, but the root supports you.¹⁹ You will say then, "Branches were broken off that I might be grafted in."²⁰ Well said. Because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith.

Col 2¹¹ In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ,¹² buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.¹³ And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses

IMPLICATIONS, APPLICATIONS, & CONCLUSIONS

► 1) God intends his children to be brought up _____ the faith, not to the faith.

Eph 6¹ Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.² "Honor your father and mother," which is the first commandment with promise:³ "that if may be well with you and you may live long on the earth."⁴ And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training [paideia] and admonition of the Lord.

Heb 12⁶ For whom the LORD loves He chastens [paideuo], and scourges every son whom He receives."⁷ If you endure chastening [paideia], God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten?⁸ But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons.

► 2) A little child's faith does not look like adult faith, but it is no less _____.

Mat 18¹ [T]he disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"² Then Jesus called a little child [paideon] to Him, set him in the midst of them,³ and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.⁴ Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.⁵ Whoever receives one little child like this in My name receives Me.⁶ But whoever causes one of these little ones [mikros] who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea."

► 3) A child brought up _____ the faith is in an entirely different situation than someone coming to the faith for the first time.

► 4) Christian parents should focus on _____ faith, not pushing a "conversion" experience.

► 5) Christian parents should pull their children toward God, grabbing them by their _____ — their objective covenant relationship with Him. You cannot strengthen a relationship by _____ whether it exists.

TO SUM UP, Christian parents should view their children and minister to them as _____ does.