

“Blast From The Past”
Ephesians 1:3-6; 3:10-15 * March 15, 2009

I. The first step in our journey toward Christlikeness:

We have to look _____ and examine ourselves.

Self-examination requires three things:

1. We have to let Jesus _____ us.
2. We have to then let Jesus _____ us.
3. Finally, we have to let Jesus _____ us.

The next step on the journey: we have to look _____.
What does this mean?

II. The Biblical Root of this Concept

“I the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.”
Exodus 20:4

- A. What does this verse mean?

- B. When the Bible speaks of “family”, to what is it referring?

- C. What’s the good news in this verse?

III. How Do We Experience Healing For The Wounds Of Our Past?

First, agree with God that how you are living _____ is profoundly shaped by how you were raised _____.

“Family patterns from the past are played out in our present relationships without us necessarily being aware of it...This family history lives inside all of us, especially in those who attempt to bury it.” ~ Pastor Pete Scazzero

Second, identify your family’s ‘_____ and _____’ – both good and bad.

A. Which negative traits ran in Abraham’s family?

B. What truths was I taught in my family about:

- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 6. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 7. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 8. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 9. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 10. _____ |

Third, put off the sinful patterns and habits of your biological family by living as an _____ child in the family of _____.

What do we receive as part of our ‘adoption’ into God’s family?

- A. We receive the _____ of God.
 1. What is the #1 cause of evil in the world today (outside of sin)?

 2. How does the New Covenant heal this curse?
 1. When a man comes and bows before the _____ of Christ.
 - a. And what happens then?

 2. What if you father can’t or won’t do that? Are you stuck being cursed?

- B. We received an extended family of _____ & _____.
 1. Why is this important?

 2. What should a broken soul find in a church devoted to Christ?

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I. The first step in our journey toward Christlikeness:

We have to look in and examine ourselves.

Self-examination requires three things:

- 1. We have to let Jesus love us.*
- 2. We have to then let Jesus wound us.*
- 3. Finally, we have to let Jesus heal us.*

The next step on the journey: we have to look back.

What does this mean?

We are all deeply marked and influenced by what happened to us in the past, and so to learn how to live vibrantly as Jesus did, we must learn to break the power of the past’s stranglehold over us. Of necessity, this means looking honestly at our family of origin, of how we were raised growing up, because those years had (or have, for those of you still living at home) a profound impact – both good and bad – on who you become.

II. The Biblical Root of this Concept

“I the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.”

Exodus 20:4

A. What does this verse mean?

This verse is not saying that God arbitrarily and randomly zaps us for things our parents and grandparents did wrong. That would hardly be fair. Instead, this verse is pointing to a powerful spiritual and social truth which we must recognize – the truth that we are shaped and impacted by how we were raised.

B. When the Bible speaks of “family”, to what is it referring?

“When the Bible uses the word ‘family’, it refers to our entire extended family over three to four generations. That means you family, in the biblical sense, includes all your brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts, grandparents, great-parents...and significant others going back to the mid-1800s. While we are affected by powerful

external events and circumstances through our earthly lives, our families are the most powerful group to which we will ever belong. Even those who left home as young adults, determined to ‘break’ from their family histories, soon find their family’s way of ‘doing’ life follows them wherever they go.” ~ Pete Scazzero

C. What’s the good news in this verse?

While the sins of a person can have a reach that can span three or four generations before exhausting itself, the power of God’s love is so much bigger, and deeper and wider, that it can span a thousand generations for those who come to him and take his hand and do it his way. There’s no comparison, in other words, between the reach of human sin and the reach of God’s grace. God’s grace can cover it all. God’s grace can break the curse of all our sin.

III. How Do We Experience Healing For The Wounds Of Our Past?

First, agree with God that how you are living now is profoundly shaped by how you were raised then.

“Family patterns from the past are played out in our present relationships without us necessarily being aware of it...This family history lives inside all of us, especially in those who attempt to bury it.” ~ Pastor Pete Scazzero

Second, identify your family’s ‘traits and truths’ – both good and bad.

A. Which negative traits ran in Abraham’s family?

Lying, lack of marital intimacy

B. What truths was I taught in my family about:

- | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. <u>Family</u> | 6. <u>Expressing Anger</u> |
| 2. <u>Money</u> | 7. <u>Relationships</u> |
| 3. <u>Conflict</u> | 8. <u>Different Cultures</u> |
| 4. <u>Sex</u> | 9. <u>Success</u> |
| 5. <u>Grief & Loss</u> | 10. <u>Feelings and Emotions</u> |

Third, put off the sinful patterns and habits of your biological family by living as an adopted child in the family of God.

What do we receive as part of our 'adoption' into God's family?

A. We receive the fatherhood of God.

1. *What is the #1 cause of evil in the world today (outside of sin)?*

Fatherless.

The Old Testament, the Old Covenant under which God related to humanity ends with the warning that fatherness will bring a curse on the land. The last verse in the Old Testament, Malachi 4:6, “[God] will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers; or else I will come and strike the land with a curse.” We are seeing this lived out today in chilling, frightening fashion. I find it interesting that when the New Covenant begins with the birth of John the Baptist, the forerunner of Jesus Christ, John's father Zechariah is told by an angel in Luke 1:17 that one of the things his son is going to do when he grows up is, “He will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children...to make ready for the Lord a people prepared.” There's going to be something about the New Covenant, something about the coming of the Messiah, that will heal the hearts of fatherless children.

2. *How does the New Covenant heal this curse?*

1. *When a man comes and bows before the Lordship of Christ.*

a. *And what happens then?*

Then Jesus will teach that man how to become a real man, who will love his wife as he should, and raise his children as he should.

2. *What if you father can't or won't do that?*

Are you stuck being cursed?

No! That part of your heart that yearns for a father's love and acceptance, and needs a father's instruction and discipline, and longs for a father's strong arms around them can yet receive those things in full. How, you ask? That's impossible! No, it's not. If your father didn't or can't or won't bow his knees to Jesus Christ, then *you* do that, and do you know what you get in exchange,

among blessings too numerous to count. You get a God who wants you to know him and relate to him as your Heavenly Father.

B. We received an extended family of brothers & sisters.

1. *Why is this important?*

Sometimes it's hard to reach out and receive the love of an invisible God. Sometimes we need “God with skin on”, like a little child once said of Jesus. And so before a wounded person can really take hold of the idea that God is their father who loves them and accepts them, they need to experience that first-hand. How do they get it? From their brothers and sisters in Christ.

2. *What should a broken soul find in a church devoted to Christ?*

We're wounded *healers*. There should be enough of Jesus seen in us and experienced in us to make a real difference. And a broken soul in a church devoted to Jesus Christ should find in that church models and mentors of what Christlikeness, and real emotional health, looks like. What's real father like? There should be examples of that in the church. Can a husband and wife really stay together and love each other for a lifetime. There should be examples of that in the church. Can a person really overcome alcoholism? Can a person get stuck in a destructive addiction, and then get unstuck? How can I learn to overcome my temper? Can I learn to value others more and stop gossiping the way I do? Will I ever be able to overcome this grief that's killing me? Can I ever learn to manage money the right way? A church should provide a bevy of brothers and sisters in Christ who can mentor and support and encourage and pray for and protect the weaker ones and the wounded ones in their midst.