

TITLE: ONE GENERATION AWAY!
The Christian's responsibility – to teach our children

TEXT: JUDGES 2:10 (Joshua 22; 24:24, 31; Judges 2:7, 10)

THESIS: The purpose of this sermon is to show the danger of a congregation falling away, regardless of its current strength level.

INTRO: With Thanksgiving only a few days away, there are many things for each of us to be thankful for: Family, friends, health, wealth, safety, outcome of the elections, etc. I am very thankful for **this congregation**. There are many reasons, but most of all for the fact that it is sound (healthy). But, just because a congregation is sound now, does not guarantee it will remain sound. There are a lot of people (forces) out there who want to make changes that God does not authorize. It has been said that *even a sound church is always one generation away from apostasy*. Why is this? Can a congregation really go from being sound to being apostate in one generation? We're going to look at just such an example in the Bible. It implies the **extreme importance of teaching our children!**

I. DANGER OF INDIVIDUAL APOSTASY:

- A. Sometimes we see individuals who were once sound fall away
 - 1. Disproof of "Once-saved-always-saved." If OSAS is true, why all the warnings? Be ye angry and sin not. Why not, Paul? **2 Tim 3:12**- why suffer?
 - 2. **Gal 5:4** - fallen from grace; **1 Cor 9:24f** - Paul might be rejected/castaway/unapproved; **2 Pet 2:20-22; Col 1:23**
 - 3. Why do Christians fall away? Sin. They continue in sin, they never repent, and are too hardened to return (**Heb 6:4-6**)
- B. But do entire congregations apostatize?

II. DANGER OF CONGREGATIONAL APOSTASY:

- A. Congregational apostasy was warned against
 - 1. **2 Cor 11:3** – Paul warned the Corinthian brethren against falling away (by the false teaching – **v. 13-15**)
 - 2. **Acts 20:28-31** – Paul warned the Ephesian elders that wolves would come into the flock (the church)
 - 3. **Rev 2:5** – One generation later, Jesus warned the Ephesian church to repent or He would remove their lampstand.
- B. OT ex. – ***Jos 22:5, 10, 12** - Here is a nation so strong and zealous for God that, even after the battles they'd fought together, they were willing to fight each other because of sin. (**24:24, 31**)
- C. BUT, **Judges 2:6-13**. How does a nation this zealous for God fall away so quickly?
 - 1. They forgot to teach their children (the next generation)
 - 2. The next generation **forgot** what God had done for them. This was the very reason God instituted the Passover meal.
- D. **Deut 6:4-7** – Danger of forgetting! We must teach the children God's ways (**Eph 6:4**). Tremendous responsibility!
- E. Joshua was not only strong, but he had taught the people to be strong (and they were after he was gone). The problem was that they didn't teach the next generation to be strong.
- F. It is not enough for a congregation to just have sound leadership (or sound adults). We also must teach our children!

III. GUARDING OURSELVES AGAINST APOSTASY:

- A. STUDY! (You can't teach what you don't know!)
 - 1. Individually – daily Bible reading, prayer for ourselves and for each other
 - 2. Spouses together; Families together
 - 3. Congregationally – group study –be here for Sun am and Wed pm studies (I take so seriously my personal responsibility as a teacher – hold me accountable for what I'm teaching)
- B. DON'T FORGET! They forgot! So we cannot forget!
 - 1. So many times God said, "I am the God of your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob...I brought you up out of Egypt"
 - 2. A much more significant event than even the exodus was the death of Christ. God doesn't want us to forget. Purpose of the Lord's Supper (1 Cor 11:24 – do in remembrance; 26 – show the Lord's death until he come)
- C. TEACH the next generation
 - 1. The more you learn, the more you'll want to teach.
 - 2. It is the responsibility of all parents to teach their children. If you don't teach them, *who will?* I guarantee that they are being taught things at school (from teachers & students) that God doesn't want them to be taught. It's up to you to make sure they have the proper **filter** through which to put the things they hear away from your house. (If you teach them properly – through God's word – they'll know how to filter out what they don't need to hear).

CONCLUSION: A lot of responsibility lies upon each of us to keep ourselves sound (healthy) and to keep others sound as well (**Gal 6:1** – "if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore him in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself lest thou also be tempted"). It all begins with our children and our own families. If you don't teach them, who will?