

THE NEXT GENERATION

Gen. 18:19

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INTRODUCTION

Every kingdom is always concern about the next king because the strength of the kingdom lies up on his shoulders. That is why the king and the kingdom is always concerned about the wellbeing of the next king. They take their time to groom, educate and pass all sort of necessary information to him. He sometimes sit with the elders in order for him to learn how to go about things in the kingdom.

They do all these because they know that if the next king is not well groomed, the kingdom falls and the king might fall as well so, it is with God's kingdom. There is a saying that the youths are the engine/power house of any organization but the truth is that, it is not just the youth but the next generations after the elders.

We are quick to point fingers at the elders, deacons & teachers of the church when there are issues in God's kingdom but the truth is that, we all are the problems of the kingdom. Some of us may say that the church teachings and programmes are watery and not beneficial, that may be true but God makes us to understand that the growth of the church depends on the family head (Father & mother) in the church.

- A. **THE FAMILY:** The home is an integral and based part of the church. The family goes a long way to build the church, which was why God encourage believers to get married to a believer so as to ensure that there is continuity in the Christian tradition/Culture. Gen. 18 vs 18 "For I know Him". God was referring to Abraham in this context, for God to know Abraham, it simply means that Abraham had a relationship with God. The major problem in the church today is that most family heads don't have true relationship with God. When you read down, God said "because he has a good relationship with me, I trust him" he will lead/command his children and household to keep my way. This implies that every head of the family or home have a duty to imprint God's instructions in the heart of their children so that they will never depart from God's instructions.
- B. **TO DO JUSTICE AND JUDGEMENT:** They will teach their children that which is good, right and just in the sight of men and God. The question is "Can a man give out what he don't have"? This is the challenge the churches are facing today.
The children that God has blessed us with are the next generation of this church (God's kingdom); the youth that accepted Jesus are they the next generation of the church?

These are some questions you should ask yourself

- Where is my wife right now?
- Where is my husband?
- Where are my kids?
- Where am I right now?

These questions are not about place and time, it's about where they are spiritually with God. The purpose of the home is to create a mini church that will create an impact in the church but unfortunately, the reverse is the case. In churches today, all we see are:

- Parents that fail to encourage their children in the things of God.
- Parents that forsake the assemblies of the saints
- Parents that discourages child discipline in the church.
- Parents that does not have inter personal relationship with God.
- Parents that encourages indecent dressing, drunkenness etc.

How can the church grow, when God does not trust you and me to lead our children in His ways.

WAY FORWARD

1. **PARENTS/MENTORS** should establish interpersonal relationship with God. Before God made that statement about Abraham in **verse 16**, it shows that Abraham was a friend of God. Parents should assume the position of a bishop, deacon, teacher etc in their various homes and help build the next generation in the church.
2. **ROLE MODEL**: Parents/mentors should leave an exemplary life that is worthy of emulation. How can you be drinking alcohol and you expect your children not to follow? How can you forsake the assemblies of the saints and expect them to be faithful, how can you be dressing exposing your body parts and expects your children to dress decently? Some of us don't even pray at home with the children. etc
3. **START EARLY**: When we start at an early stage, or age to inculcate God's instruction and the teachings of the bible to our children, it will help to guide and direct Godly discipline in them at all times and by the grace of God they shall not depart from it.
4. **EARLY ENCOURAGEMENT**: We should learn to encourage our children which are the next generation in the activities of the church. Encourage them to go to their various classes, to participate in any activities of the church, to be in any of the department in the church, help them out in their assignment given to them both from the church and school, if you are not encouraged or okay with what they are been taught, call the attention of the elders and bring your ideas and opinion in other for the work and teachings of God to move forward and to draw closer the attention of the new or next generation to God.
5. **FINANCIAL CHALLENGES**: No matter how small a congregation is, they need money to run their church. The church offering is very low and it's reducing every day because there is no empowerment. The next generation should be empowered, this

can be done by employing brethren in the congregation, by linking or introducing brethren with contracts jobs, sell ideas to them, encouraging them to do something no matter what and how small it is. Also, brethren should learn to be faithful and hardworking in order to encourage helping hands in the congregation.

6. The elders should come up with more programs to build up the next generation because Satan is developing every day, thus we also need to be very innovative about the growth of the church.

CONCLUSION

One thing is certain that, if parents, church leaders do not focus on themselves and the next generation, the church here will fall.

I know it is not an easy task to bring up a child in the way of God because of the kind of society we find ourselves today, but the fact remains that “If we don’t train our children in the way of the Lord like Abraham, the society will teach them her ways. As for us, the next generation/youths should not despise Godly council, let us try to improve everyday in our spiritual life. We should be active in the work of God. People say that we (youths) are the leaders of tomorrow but I tell you today that your leadership starts now because it is what you know today that you will use in leading us tomorrow thus we need to be well equipped for the task ahead of us.

For zonal leaders, we should encourage the young ones by giving them the opportunity to teach, lead and participate in the functions of the church and monitor them as they do so. We may not be perfect but let it be that you contributed your best in building the next generation.

NB: When every home feel concerned about the spiritual growth of their children, husbands, brothers, sisters, wives, relations and friends that are in the fold, then we make the work easier for the church.

Prayers: May our good Lord bless this words in our hearts and give us the strength to build ourselves and the next generations in Christ name. Amen