

## INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **2John 4-9.**
- B. A 1994 survey among 3,800 kids (ages 11-18), 80% of which went regularly to church worship services, said:
  - 1. 66% had lied to their parents or another adult in the last 3 months.
  - 2. 59% had lied to their peers in the last three months.
  - 3. 55% said they were confused about life.
  - 4. 50% said they were stressed out.
  - 5. 46% said they were always tired.
  - 6. Others regularly cheated on exams, were hooked on smoking, gambling, watching X-rated movies, and engaging in sex.
- C. What is happening to our kids? Why aren't they adopting our values? And what can we do about it?

## I. A FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE.

- A. There is one fundamental, major change that has taken place between this generation and the one that precedes it. There is no objective standard of truth, morality, right, and wrong.
- B. Truth has become a matter of taste and morality a matter of preference. The "attitude is":
  - 1. "If it feels good, do it."
  - 2. "If it works for you, why not?"
- C. Schools offer a "value free, morally neutral education." This attitude basically says, "We cannot tell you what is right and what is wrong, you must decide for yourselves. All we can do is make you aware of the options."

## II. A CLEAR STANDARD OF RIGHT AND WRONG.

- A. The FIRST thing that is needed is "a clear standard of right and wrong." A moral compass to measure crime and punishment, business ethics, community values, character, and social conduct.
- B. We need a lens to view society, law, science, art, and politics. I believe that lens should be the Bible. It should be the standard by which we measure right and wrong.
- C. In the same study as mentioned above:
  - 1. 57% said that no objective standard of truth exists.
  - 2. 85% said that what is not right for one person could be right for another.
  - 3. 45% said that everything in life is negotiable.
- D. With this kind of mindset, the distinction between right and wrong is fluid, subject to change, relative, and personal (not universal).
- E. This was the world of Israel before King Saul. The Law of Moses was in force, but . the people did what seemed right in their own eyes (Jud.21:25).
- F. Jeremiah preached to the failing nation of Judah and told them they had not solved their problems, they had forgotten the seriousness of sin (Jer. 6:13-16).
- G. To turn families and young people around today we need to accept the one, objective standard of truth...THE BIBLE.

## III. DEFEND THE TRUTH OF THE SAVIOR AND THE NEW TESTAMENT.

- A. It is no longer enough to say that something is right or something is wrong because Mom and Dad say so.
- B. Parents must begin to say no to unacceptable behavior in a way that shows the WHY behind it. There needs to be a defense of the truth of Christ and the NT.

- C. "In a society without moral boundaries, where personal choice sets the standard for what is right--we need a truth apologetic, a ready defense of truth. We need to help our children understand that there are absolutes--that which is right for all people, for all times, and for all places."
- D. When children do not accept an objective standard of behavior:
  - 1. 48% will cheat on an exam.
  - 2. 2 times more likely to watch a pornographic film.
  - 3. 2 times more likely to steal.
  - 4. 3 times more likely to use illegal drugs.
  - 5. 6 times more likely to attempt suicide.
  - 6. 2 times more likely to be angry with life.
  - 7. 2 times more likely to be lacking in purpose.
  - 8. 2 times more likely to be resentful.
- E. The only way kids have a chance to make good, rational, logical, moral decisions in our immoral world is if we as parents and other influential adults defend the objective standard of truth as found in Christ and the NT.
- F. The research is clear--if kids develop solid convictions about the truth, it will double, triple, even quadruple their chances of making good moral choices in an immoral world (Jn. 17:17).

#### IV. THE BENEFITS OF MAKING THE RIGHT CHOICES.

- A. We live in an "instant society." We are conditioned by having fast food, Insty-Prints, Express Mail, Get-n-Go stores, etc. Our computers have to work faster and faster, the speed limits are on the rise, etc.
- B. But this 'right now" mentality can be dangerous. Sin is appealing in our culture, because it promises instant gratification. Right choices, often require waiting for long-term results.
- C. Lying... can provide an immediate benefit, that truth cannot.  
Cheating... can provide an immediate result, that hard work cannot.  
Stealing... can provide an immediate desire, that paying for something cannot.
- D. In short, wrong choices promise instant, appealing benefits.  
Couple that with, "you are your own judge of right and wrong," and you have a generation that doesn't really know right from wrong, and that is a formula for disaster.

#### V. EQUIP YOUR YOUNGSTER(S) NOW.

- A. To equip a young person with the knowledge they need does not guarantee that they will always make the right choices, but it does help them to develop good convictions. Our society is void of conviction, especially to do right by God. Our example to them and the instruction that we give them will help to provide that conviction (the basis of decision making).
- B. The apostle Paul talked about equipping us serve in the body (Eph. 4:11-13). He also spoke of being equipped to stand firm against Satan and sin (Eph. 6:13).
- C. A couple of examples of how to equip young people so that they can make the right choices about moral and ethic issues: chastity and honesty.
- D. About chastity:
  - 1. Chastity protects from unplanned pregnancy and provides for optimum child-rearing.
  - 2. Chastity protects from sexually transmitted diseases and provides for peace of mind.
  - 3. Chastity protects from sexual insecurity and provides for truth.
  - 4. Chastity protects from emotional distress and provides for true intimacy.
 THIS IS TRUE BECAUSE...God approves of chastity (1Cor. 6:18-20).
- E. About honesty:
  - 1. Honesty protects one from guilt and give a clear conscience.

2. Honesty protects from shame and gives a sense of accomplishment.
  3. Honesty protects from the cycle and trap of deceit and builds a good reputation.
  4. Honesty protects from ruined relationships and gives trust.
- THIS IS TRUE BECAUSE... God approves of honesty (Jn. 8:32).

### **CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.**

- A. What happens to children in America on one average day? According to the *ABA Journal*:
  1. 2,795 teens become pregnant (1,106 will have an abortion).
  2. 1,027 babies are born drug or alcohol exposed.
  3. 211 children are arrested for drug abuse.
  4. 437 children are arrested for drinking and/or drunken driving.
  5. 30 children are wounded by gunfire (10 will die).
  6. 135,000 children carry a gun to school.
  7. 1,512 teens drop out of school.
  8. 1,840 children are abused or neglected.
  9. 3,288 children run away (1,629 are in adult jails).
  10. 6 teens commit suicide.
- B. "Our children need us more than ever."
- C. Resolve to live for Jesus, and teach His word to your children.
- D. Plan of salvation for non-Xians; erring Xians.