Dear Readers

This is our twelfth and final issue of encouragement passages and activities for our RE Teachers. Here, we have our preacher’s sermon to remind us that children are our heritage from the Lord. Hope you enjoy this issue as well!

Raising Godly People

Adapted from the sermon by Pr. Peter Shee

We live in a very progressive age. When I was born, we did not have computers, but now we do not only have computers, there are also so many different gadgets that we could never image of and it is so difficult to just catch up with these different modern and latest technologies. So if we have to ask anyone today, they will say that we are in a very developed society with scientific development.

However many of us have the wrong concept that we are very civilized. Is the world getting better and better? Are human beings getting better and better? What is the bible’s take of our age?

2 Timothy 3: 1-5. “But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!”

I can never imagine how Paul can come out with so many different adjectives to describe the ills of the modern men, but it is true. The more we look at the world today the more we can see the escalating evil. So it is no wonder that the Lord Jesus Himself said, “When the Son of man come, can He still find man of faith on earth?”

The world did not welcome Jesus when He first came to the world. He came to His own, but His own did not receive Him. So at the 2nd coming of Jesus, when He stepped into our midst, will He find faith in our midst? Will He find people with virtues because of their faith? The church is purchased with His blood which He has cleansed and nurtured. It should be filled with people with virtues, people who eagerly expect His coming. But for that to happen, not only should we preserve our faith in our lifetime, we should also raise godly people.

Once I asked some of my students, “Imagine there is a day in the full 24 hours that we could do anything that you like, and God does not need you to take into account. After 24 hours everything will be erased from memory, God will pretend that it never happened. What will you do?” I would expect to get replies like going to the theme park to spend the whole day there, enjoy with all my friends one by one, batch by batch. But I’m shocked by this teenager from among us who actually replied that he might kill somebody! This kind of thought doesn’t just drop from the sky, it spans from the evil from his heart. Perhaps if he could blind the eyes of the law he would go and kill. I was really worried what kind of person he would grow up to be. Today he is still in the church, a father of a few children already.
In Micah 7:2 it says a brother lies in wait for a brother; they all lie in wait for blood. That means to say that he would harm people even of his family.

In another case, I heard from a sister who came back home disappointed after attending her mother’s funeral. Her older brother was indirectly responsible for her mother’s death as he ignored her call for help when she suffered great discomfort and difficulty in breathing. Not only did he not send his mother to hospital with the money she gave to him, he even reprimanded her for making so much noise and groaning and these will affect his work the next day because he couldn’t sleep.

Some people claimed that the church is a cross-section of society and so we may find similar types of people in the church. Is this so? Does God want it to be so? Then what is the difference between the church and society? We are specially chosen from the world. The love of God should be in our heart, and overflows to others. We should be transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit and we should live our life anew. How can the church who is purchased and cleansed by the blood of Christ through His death, be the same as society!

Psalms 15 tell us who may abide in His tabernacle and on His holy hill. Can we find them in the church? How can there be a lack of righteous, godly and loving people in the church?

Psalms 12:5. “For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now I will arise,” says the LORD; I will set him in the safety for which he yearns.”

There is no righteous person in the world so God has prepared a place of safety for His people whom He set apart for Himself (Psalms 4:3). This place of safety for His godly people should be here in our midst. We should work very hard, so that when people come to our church, they will find that it is indeed a place where there is no squabbling and no fighting, but a circle of people who have genuine love for others. Outside this circle, people can still be hurt. Let this be a place of safety where God would shelter the needy and the poor.

The second thing I would like to share is that godliness is a heritage that has to be passed on.

Malachi 2:15. “But did He not make them one, having a remnant of the Spirit? And why one? He seeks godly offspring. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously with the wife of his youth.”

God created only one pair of human beings. When God created Adam and Eve, they were created in God’s image. They were created good. The best thing of it is that they bore God’s image and the nature of God. God wanted godly offspring through this one pair, because He wants godliness to be passed down from one generation to another; from our parents. Unfortunately Adam and Eve failed, but God has restored this image of God to us now. We have all been baptised and have all put on Christ, and the spirit of God has come into our hearts. It is not just putting on Christ but our inner man must be conformed to the image of God’s son. Then we have to pass it down to our children.
The unit of measurement that God uses is the family. When God saves, He wants to save the family, like Noah, Lot, and Abraham. God saves by the family, so when a family unit has offspring, they must have them baptised and be taught in the way of the Lord.

All parents must understand that children are a heritage from the LORD (Psalms 127:3). Parents will give the best to their children, be it health or education, but as far as their spiritually, faith and their soul, we do not play our roles as parents. Our role is as guardians, as stewards, thus we do not instruct them according to our own ways. If we fail we are accountable to God.

Psalms 16:5. “O LORD, You are the portion of my inheritance and my cup; You maintain my lot.”

God is our heritage. We have to pass that heritage to our children, from generation to generation. If our parents give us something and say that this is meant for us to keep for our children. Would we not actually treasure this heirloom? It could be a business, or it could be just a book, or some treasure such as jewelry. But whatever it is, it bears a lot of meaning especially if it has been passed down from many generations. We will not want to lose it, nor pawn it away. We want to ensure that we are able to pass it down to our children, and that our children will pass it down to their children. This is the best gift that we can give to our children.

God has given these children to us and we are stewards to God’s children. If we keep this family unit strong, then we can ensure the future generation will also be strong. Our relationship with our children is just for a few decades, but their relationship with God is forever.

Once a father of my RE student came to me to seek help because his child had locked himself in the room to visit the websites that he shouldn’t see. When he scolded the son, the son retaliated. Therefore the father was at a loss of what to do. Some parents would eventually stop telling their children that they were wrong thinking it is of no use talking to them. But this father did not give up on his child. Although we should not be a nag, we should not stop totally, because studies have shown that children need these, and they do appreciate their parents telling them. Remind them and show that you are not happy, but don’t make them detest you. Finally pray more than we talk to them. This is a good way to balance it out. In fact this father did more than these, he bought bibles, highlighter and notebook for his child, and also taught him how to highlight the bible. He would also gather people of the same age as his son to discuss the bible together. It worked and God rewarded his efforts. I believe that prayers play a great role also. Now, this child is a grown up young man serving in the church already.

The third thing I would like to share is that although godliness is a heritage, it does not come naturally. Although we are baptized, it doesn’t mean that our children don’t need to be baptised. Moreover godliness is not a tangible thing that we can pass it from one hand to another physically.

The bible says “Train up the child when he is young, so that when his old he won’t depart from it.” So we do not just baptise the children, we must teach the children also. Passing down godliness is passing down the teachings of the bible.
Psalms 14:2-3. "The LORD looks down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there are any who understand, who seek God. They have all turned aside, they have together become corrupt; There is none who does good, no, not one.

When God looks down on the earth, He sees that nobody will naturally seek God. It is natural that one is wicked. When a newborn child grows up, he will never seek God. Who grows up without committing sins? From infancy their hearts is filled with evil and wickedness. That is why we have to teach our children and we have to teach them young, otherwise it would be too late. We have to teach them even before they could think of wicked things. Some even read bible stories to the fetus before the baby is born. What will you do?

Titus 1:1. "...according to the faith of God's elect and the acknowledgment of the truth which accords with godliness"

It says that godliness is a truth. It is a truth and it is also knowledge. That’s why godliness must be learnt, because it is a truth and it is something that must be acknowledged, something that must be learnt.

Finally as teachers to these children, we have to be concern for their spiritual lives. What is teaching? Is it just classroom teaching? In 1 Corinthians 4:15, Paul says we may have ten thousands instructors in Christ, but we do not have many fathers. Many teachers do not have the love for these REU children like the father or the mother does.

1 Thessalonians 2:7-8. “But we were gentle among you, just as a nursing mother cherishes her own children. So, affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us.”

These apostles look at the church members like a nursing mother to the children. Thus as RE teacher, we need to look out for our children and they must be always be on our mind. Not only do we remember that we are RE teacher when we are preparing for lessons. Every time when we come to church, remember to specially look out for them, talk to them, and talk to the parents. In our prayers, pray for them. Mention them by name, and mention their needs. How do we know their needs? This is through our contact with them and their parents, and also through visits to their homes, and then we will know what to pray for.

In conclusion:

2 Peter 3:7. “But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.”

verse 11. “Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness”

Noah was saved, Noah and his family (2 Peter 2:5). God will no longer destroy the earth with flood, but He will destroy it with fire. When the rest of the world burns, we who are godly will be saved. How about our children? Let us be like Noah, not just the godly man will be saved, but also the godly families!
Why should you care about school? What makes education worth all the hard work? Below, list five benefits of education, and answer the question.

**Why Is Education Important?**

1. ____________________________________________________________
2. ____________________________________________________________
3. ____________________________________________________________
4. ____________________________________________________________
5. ____________________________________________________________

**WHY I CARE?**

Was it easy to think of benefits of school? Explain.

Based on the Scripture passages read earlier, what importance do you think God places on your education?

What do these benefits tell you about the value of school?

How do you think school fits into God's plan for your life?