

FELLOWSHIP NOTES ~ Sunday, May 17th, 2026



Part 4: "Pass It On"

(Slide)



Two summers ago at the Paris Olympic Games, the US Men had a strong track and field team, expected to haul in lots of gold medals, including one for the 4 x 100 Relay Team.

A relay race is tricky. The whole key to winning is as much technical as it is having speed, most notably the in the handoffs of the baton. That area of the track is known as the "passing zone".

The passing zone represents the ultimate picture of teamwork and precision. That exchange of the baton between runners can make or break winning any medal or disqualification.

In Paris, the men were looking good until they botched the handoff. As a result, what once were high expectations ended in finishing in 7th place, out of medal contention.

The same is true when it comes to the good life. It can be easy to allow ourselves to get caught up in running the race of life, of amassing wealth and material possessions but forget that just around the corner,

We're going to be entering the "passing zone", where there will be an exchange – an exchange to the next generation. That exchange will determine victory or if we disqualify ourselves and finish our race out of medal contention.

This is important not just for us today, but it's critically important to the next generation sitting in our midst this morning and those coming behind us not in this room.

Today we are wrapping up this series on Living the Good Life and since today is Next Generation Sunday, it seems appropriate that we would consider how to pass on to the next generation what God says about living the good life and how our children, grandchildren, and those coming after us can and should live that good life.

Now remember, we've established that the world has its own definition of the good life and of course that is diametrically opposed to what God says it is.

God's definition of the good life can be summed up succinctly in Acts 20:35...

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*“...remember the words of the Lord Jesus, because he said,
‘There is more happiness in giving than in receiving.’”*

Acts 20:35

So with that verse and many others, we adopted this as a brief description of the good life as defined by God...

The Good Life

Living a lifestyle of generosity for the glory of God which shapes us in becoming more like Jesus.

We learned that if we're going to make generosity a lifestyle, we have to possess and put into practice a Biblical Philosophy of Money and Possessions.

In other words, everything we do must be grounded in the principles of Scripture and lived out every day. Then last Sunday we highlighted some of those Scriptural Principles of life management and generosity and talked about ways to put them into practice.

Now you may be a teenager or a young adult here this morning with no children of your own but someday you probably will and when you do God will want you to pass on to them what we're learning in God's Word today, so please don't check out this morning, ask God to help you be a learner as much as anyone else here.

I'm just going to quickly cover some practical steps you can take. If you want to delve even deeper and learn even more, we have copies of this 20-page article from Crown Financial Ministries called "Finances for Children and Teens" and it's available at the Tower in the lobby after the service.

How to Train the Next Generation to Live the Good Life

(Slide) 1. Give your children something greater than money – your time – 1 Samuel 2.

Here in 1 Samuel 2, a priest named Eli was the spiritual leader of the nation of Israel. He was himself a faithful and hard-working priest. But he was a lousy father! READ 1 Samuel 2:12-14.

So how did Eli respond to the evil lifestyles his sons' sin and their rebellion against God? READ 1 Samuel 2:22-24.

All Eli could do was give a verbal rebuke to his sons. Why? Because they were grown men by this point. Eli had failed to prioritize his own sons when they were growing up and teach them and model for them a fear of the Lord.

He let the responsibilities of his job and the priesthood swallow up all his time. He failed to realize that his first area of responsibility wasn't the people of Israel and their needs – as important as that was.

His first responsibility was to his children – his own family. In the end, over in chapter 4, God judged both Eli and his sons, and all three died on the same day.

And when we think about Eli today, we don't remember his success in his work as a priest, we only think of his legacy of failure as a parent. He failed to prioritize time with his sons and the whole nation was negatively impacted because of it.

Dads, your children won't remember what you did FOR them while they were growing up, as much as they will what you did WITH them. I would dare say that 99-100% of you listening to this message this morning...

Have provided for or are giving your children/grandchildren more toys and material possessions than they could ever play with or will ever appreciate.

But at the end of the day, how many people say in their adulthood...
"I had lots of stuff, but my dad was never there for me."? LOTS DO!

Dads, moms, don't substitute money or possessions for time with your kids. No parent ever looks back and says, "Gee, I wish I'd spent more time at work and less with my children." It's usually the other way around.

Your children need you to teach and train them about God's view of money and possessions and that greater than getting money is sharing it and spreading their God-given possessions around to God and others so that they are storing up treasures in heaven.

If you're here, and you're thinking, "But Rob, my kids are in their teen years already, have I missed the opportunity?" Yes, you are late to the party, but No, you're never too late! Start today. And that leads us to...

(Slide) 2. Use life's teachable moments (Proverbs 22:6; Deut. 6:6-9).

Everyday life brings many opportunities to teach our children an eternal perspective on money and possessions...that is, if we're watching and ready to take advantage of those opportunities.

From when grandpa and grandma send a birthday card with money in it, to when the washer breaks down and you need another one, to the need to keep your oil changed in your car...

To refusing to buy every little piece of clothing and equipment that all the sports teams recommend you have but aren't always necessary... parents, keep your eyes peeled and be ready to teach your child the biblical way he or she ought to live.

***“Train a child in the way he should go,
and when he is old he will not turn from it.” Proverbs 22:6***

[READ QUOTE #1 FROM THE Finances for Children and Teens Article)

Recently we were talking with our adult daughter and she was talking about how when she was playing sports growing up in school, there was always something else everyone on the team thought they had to have – another practice jersey or shirt, another pair of shoes, a new backpack – you name it.

And she didn't like it when this happened because many times we didn't buy for her what she wanted to have, and she usually didn't have all the extra gear or clothing that many of the other kids had because we put our foot down and refused to spend countless dollars on things just because of peer pressure.

So interestingly enough, in our discussion, she admitted that back then she complained a lot about that but now she realizes why we did what we did and she sees the wisdom in it and is going to do the same thing some day. Teachable moments are important.

(Slide) 3. Take a field trip / go on a missions trip (2 Corinthians 4:18; 2 Peter 3:10-14; 1 John 2:17).

Turn to 2 Corinthians 4:18 (READ)

Our children and young people need a reality check when it comes to understanding and believing what this verse says. Everything we see around us, except the Word of God and people, is temporary and if we focus our lives on what is temporary, we going to face a shocking reality when we get to heaven.

That's why it's good to go on a missions trip together so your family can learn to appreciate what they have and realize that they are blessed beyond measure and they should use their blessings to bless others.

That's what I love about our Mexico Missions trips. As soon as you cross the border into Tijuana, there's a stark reality that is impossible to miss: you're not in Kansas anymore, Dorothy!

You come to possess a greater appreciation for the blessings of modern conveniences and material goods that while many have in Mexico, a great many more do not have, and you do – from clean water, to proper sanitation, to 24/7 access to electricity and other necessities we may take for granted.

So get your children outside of their surroundings, outside of their comfort zones so they can not only appreciate what they have, but gain a heart of compassion for those who don't have what you have.

(Slide) 4. Teach them to link money with labor (2 Thess. 3:10; Prov. 10:4; 13:11; 12:24; 14:23).

TURN to 2 Thess. 3:10 (Read).

I've provided several other verses that hit this point home that the availability of money is tied to hard work. I like this one in Proverbs 12:24...

You gotta love this guy... 😊

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We have to be careful that as parents we don't dole our money out to our children whenever they need it or ask for it and not help them understand where that money came from and the work you did to earn it. We need to help our kids see the value in working hard and earning money honestly.

My parents did that for me by insisting that the summer after 7th grade that I find a way to make some money so I could help pay for new school clothes in the fall.

I was already working a paper route, but they didn't want me sitting around all summer with not much to do. (explain a paper route).

So that summer was first experience detasseling corn. How many of you detasseled corn in the summer growing up? You start early in the morning when the corn is covered with dew, so you get sopping wet first thing...

Then in the afternoon the sun is beating down on you so you are sopping wet with sweat when it's time to be done. But it sure was nice to have that paycheck right before the start of school!

After that when I hit high school it was Kentucky Fried Chicken, working for minimum wage of \$2.90/hr. Boy, those were the good 'ole days! 😊

Could I just encourage you parents quickly quick here, if you have a teen son or daughter, according to the latest statistics, youth are spending between 7.5 - 9 HOURS/Day in front of some kind of screen.

I don't know what you allow for your son or daughter, but if you don't set limits and provide accountability, not only are you not helping them link money with labor...

You're assisting them in establishing habits that will negatively impact every part of their lives, potentially, for the rest of their lives. So don't be a push over. Assume your authority as a parent and take a stand and don't back down and start as early in your child's life as possible.

(Slide) 5. Teach them how to save (Proverbs 6:6-8).

Saving allows us to have financial reserves for the possibility of experiencing hard times in the future. When we don't plan ahead and save, we are more prone to go into debt which the Bible cautions is unwise.

Of course, we shouldn't save to the exclusion of practicing a lifestyle of generosity which some people have fallen into the trap of doing. One thing is for sure, there's no way to out-give God and we must take advantage of opportunities to teach this to our children and youth.

In fact sometimes, the Lord provides resources or things for us, to meet a need in our life but other times he does that, but they're not meant for us to hold onto, but to give to others to meet their needs.

A couple of years ago, there was an older couple out in the country that was getting ready to move and in the months leading up to the move, they would occasionally place a few of their unwanted items out by the road for anyone to take. They didn't seem interested in going thru the hassle of selling them.

For example, one day we drove by and there was a woman's bike sitting out there on it's kick stand. So we pulled in and took a look, and while it wasn't a brand new bike...

It was in perfect condition with a helmet, a lock and chain, and the owner's manual hanging nicely from the handlebar. Looked just like Christmas morning sitting out there by the highway.

At that time Lisa had an older garage sale bike so we pulled in and stuck the bike in the back of the pickup and went home and inspected it and Lisa loved it. So we thanked God for it and she still uses it today.

Another time we drove by and there was a push mower out by the road. So we stopped and it was a Honda mower with a grass catching bag and the owner's manual taped on top of the engine. Christmas came again.

It was already cold outside and we weren't sure if ran or not so we took it home and put it in the garage and a few months later when it was warmer, I put gas in it and it started immediately. Again, though not new, it was in perfect condition.

We weren't sure what to do with it because with 3+ acres to mow we really didn't have a need for it so we thought about selling it, then we became aware of a need someone else had for a push mower, so we gave it away believing that God was just using us as a conduit to provide a blessing to someone else at a time of need.

One thing this reminds us is any time you receive an unexpected gift of some kind – money, items that were given to you in whatever fashion, our first thought should be, “Lord, is this for me/us, or for someone else?”

Sometimes the answer is obvious because it met a need you have, but sometimes it's not so obvious, so we have to go to prayer to ask the Lord to show us how to best use what he's graciously provided.

[READ QUOTE #2 FROM THE Finances for Children and Teens Article)

The Bible emphasizes that saving money is a wise practice to develop. Saving is part of good management of our resources. The Bible uses an analogy from nature to help us understand this wisdom...

TURN to Proverbs 6:6-8 (READ)

The older your children get the bigger the items they will want to buy or want YOU to buy. When they're younger it's smaller toys and before you know it you're looking at cars.

Don't buy your kids everything they want or even their legitimate desires. Teach your kids the value of saving their money so they can purchase things on their own. Help them set goals and work toward reaching those goals.

We've done that with our kids when they wanted bicycles, paintball guns, real guns, cars... all sorts of things. Teach them the value of earning money and saving it.

(Slide) 6. Get them started on a lifestyle of giving (Lev. 27:30; Malachi 3:8-10).

Your kids are never too young to start tithing and bringing an offering with them to church. If you'll start when they are young and help them stick with it, they'll grow up and it will just be part of their life as a follower of Jesus Christ.

Also, help them learn to give generously to God and to others above their tithe. When we take up special offerings here for various causes, help them participate – things like Operation Christmas Child, etc. This helps them develop a generous heart for God and others.

(Slide) 7. Teach them how to say “no” (Hebrews 13:5; Galatians 5:22-23; Titus 2:12).

“Keep your life free from the love of money. Be satisfied with what you have, for he himself has said, ‘I will never leave you or abandon you.’”

Hebrews 13:5

Most children, since they don’t understand how money works, are by nature impulsive spenders. We have to help them develop resistance to spending and an acceptance of being satisfied and content.

If you say YES every time you’re at the store and your child asks you for something, or your teenager expects you to pay for everything in their life, they’ll never going to learn that resistance. They’re never going to learn what’s called delayed gratification. It’s also called self-control.

I don’t mean that you never say Yes, but you have to strike a balance if they’re going to learn to be content with what they have.

Also, as they delay their gratifications, they’re also learning to trust God to meet their needs. How many times have you read the end of that verse (“I will never leave...”), and you applied it in some other way?

That promise from the Lord is directly tied to being content and satisfied with what He has already provided for you. When we learn and practice that satisfaction, we have God's promise that he will be with us, and He'll provide for us.

Christian author Jerry Bridges has written, "Contentment is one of the most distinguishing traits of the godly person, because a godly person has his heart or her focused on God rather than possessions or position or power."

(Slide) 8. Do not underestimate the power of your example.

I read a quote this week that says, "There are only three ways to teach a child. The first is by example. The second is by example. The third is by... example."

Children learn not just from what we say, but from what we do. Parents, your actions speak louder than your words. If you're not tithing, your kids probably aren't going to tithe.

If you're not living a generous life toward God and others, they probably won't either. If you're not faithfully managing God's money and possessions they're going to struggle to manage them as well.

BE the example your children need to learn from and embrace a biblical philosophy of money and possessions. The "passing zone" is life will inevitably come.

Do everything you can with God's help, not to botch the handoff. As you do, you'll be setting them up to live the good life, and hey, any parent who loves Jesus wouldn't want to do that – amen?!

LET ME CLOSE WITH THIS:

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At the end of the 1800's a huge gold rush took place up in Canada called the Klondike Gold Rush. One fall during the rush two miners struck a huge deposit of gold. Every day they dug and uncovered more and more gold.

They were so focused on getting more and more gold that they failed to realize that winter would soon be upon them. They neglected to store up provisions for the harsh winter that was coming.

Sure enough the first blizzard came. As the temperatures dropped and the snow came down they began to freeze. One of the men scribbled a note explaining their situation.

Several months later a party of prospectors came upon the two miners and their handwritten note. Their frozen bodies were lying on top of a huge pile of gold.

Parents, our society is teaching our children to grab and scratch and hold on to money and possessions at all costs. This self-centeredness seeps into their soul and they grow up and keep on buying more and bigger toys.

No one's telling them that there's a bigger picture. No one's telling them that winter is coming – eternity is coming, and they better be storing up for life in eternity.

Parents, grandparents, and all of you who are future parents: store up for yourselves treasure in heaven where moths and rust cannot corrupt and where thieves cannot break in and steal and whatever you do, teach the next generation to do the same!

Fellowship, I can honestly, I'm sad that we're done with this series. I love you and I love preparing you for the day when you'll be with the Lord in heaven...

And he will ask you to give an accounting of your life and what you did with the resources and the blessings he gave you while you were here on earth. I hope and pray, you'll live in such a way that He'll say to you, "Well done, good, and faithful servant."

So, where do we go from here?

(NOTES) Taking it Home:

1. Pick up the free article at the Tower beside the Welcome Center, ***Finances for Children and Teens*** (Article also on back of notes)

2. Learn more about living a lifestyle of generosity by checking out the resources in the café. Pick up your free copy of Managing God's Money by Randy Alcorn.
3. Discover ways to effectively manage your personal life by attending the Faithful Finances in a Modern World Workshop – TODAY. FREE!
4. Engage your generosity in some way with God's help today!
Obedience is always best practiced immediately – *"This is how we know that we know him: If we keep his commands."* 1 Jn. 2:3