

The Power of Parents | Genesis 26 Sermon Discussion Participant's Guide

Purpose of Discussion: To come away with an action step to pass the "baton of faith" on to the next generation.

Sermon Refresher: Genesis 26 surveys the life of Isaac, Abraham's son. Isaac is faced with the same challenges and circumstances that Abraham faced years before. Instead of trusting God to protect and provide for him, Isaac gives in to fear, telling the same lie about his wife being his sister and preparing to sacrifice his wife's honor for his own safety. He follows in the same footsteps and sins of his father. The impact that our current generation will have on the future is great.

Icebreaker: In what ways are you like your parents? In what ways are you different from them?

Transition: The parallels in Isaac's life to Abraham's shouldn't come as a shock to us, because all of us can look back and see the ways, for better or for worse, our parents have impacted and shaped us.

Discussion:

1. Keith started off his sermon talking about the importance of passing on the baton of our faith: "The baton that we must pass is faith in King Jesus, the only good and wise king. Our responsibility as parents is to handoff faith in Christ to our kids. Our responsibility as a church is to handoff our faith in Christ to the next generation... **The church is only one generation from extinction.**" What did you think about this? Was this a new thought to you?
2. Who has passed the baton of faith onto you? How have you seen your parents' faith have an effect (good or bad) on your own?
3. While Keith spoke primarily to those who are parents, hoping to be parents one day, or grandparents, the entire church community is charged with this responsibility. Whether you are a biological parent or not, who might look to you as a spiritual parent?

4. Read the following verses. How do each of these verses inform how we pass on the faith?

Psalm 145:4

⁴ One generation shall commend your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts.

Psalm 78:4

⁴ We will not hide [the past deeds] from their children, but tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the LORD, and his might and the wonders that he has done.

Deuteronomy 6:5-8

⁵ You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. ⁶ And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. ⁷ You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.

Titus 2:3

³ Older women...are to teach what is good, ⁴ and so train the younger women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled, pure...

5. In 2 Corinthians, Paul directs his letter to all believers. He uses another word to illustrate the lifestyle of the believer. What comes to your mind when you think of an ambassador? What do ambassadors do? What might it look like to be an ambassador for Christ to your kids? To those who look to you as a spiritual parent?

Read 2 Corinthians 5:20.

²⁰ Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

6. Why can passing on our faith to our kids and the next generation, seem so difficult? Why is it so hard? What prevents you from prioritizing passing on the baton of faith, from talking about Jesus and your personal faith, from engaging with your kids or others around you?

THE **crossing** **small groups**

7. What might you need to say no to so that you can say yes to the most important things (walking with God, engaging with your kids and with others God has placed you with)?
8. Keith reminded us that there are no perfect parents in the Bible, but it is God who has entrusted you with these kids (and those who God has placed in your life, if you're not a parent). Paul, writing about his labor for the Colossians to know Jesus as mature believers, says this in Colossians 1. How does Paul describe his own actions? How does he describe God's?

[Read Colossians 1:28-29.](#)

²⁸ Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. ²⁹ For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.

9. If you are a parent, what are one or two steps you can start to take this week to begin to develop a lifestyle of engagement with your kids and prioritize the most important things? If you're not a parent, how might God be calling you to "pass the baton"? What is a step you can take?

Sharing and Prayer:

Consider breaking up into groups of 2 or 3 and spend some time confessing ways we have failed in prioritizing passing on the faith to the next generation and engaging with our kids or others about Jesus. Ask for God's forgiveness, that he would be your help, and thank him for not leaving you alone in this call.