



CELL GUIDE 2015

Theme	Jubilee – Year of Forgiveness
Topic	Integrating Faith@Home
Speaker	Ps Andrew Tan
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Message Summary

Integrating Faith@Home

Sermon key text: Deuteronomy 6:1-12

One would expect a Christian to practise his faith at home regardless of whether he comes from a Christian family or not. However, the shocking truth is that many families today do not do so; only a small percentage of children engage in some form of activity in relation to their Christian faith with their parents. The result of this reality is that 60-90% of young people walk away from their faith after school. Although not everyone has children, this sermon is still applicable to us as there is always the next generation around us whom we can parent.

Who Should Be Responsible for the Faith of the Next Generation and How?

1. The Primary Influencer – Church or Family?

In Deuteronomy 6:1-12, the new generation of Israelites are finally going to enter the Promised Land and Moses therefore gives them instructions so that they would know their job description. It is interesting to note that he did not tell them to farm or shepherd. Instead, he told them first to keep the Lord's commandments, to fear Him and to love the Lord their God with all their hearts, souls and might (Deut 6:1-5) and then to teach them diligently to their children (v6).

This gives us a clear picture of what was first and foremost in God's heart and on His mind – the family's role in faith formation. Nowhere in this passage or in the Bible does it say that the Church is solely responsible or even responsible at all for a child's faith in God. Hence, it is clear that the family holds the main responsibility for imparting faith in children and to help them to grow in it.

2. The Role of the Church

In today's world, parents have an "outsourcing" mentality for teaching a child faith while the Church – the expert – meets this demand willingly. However, the family should be the primary source while the Church comes alongside as a lifelong partner to equip us for this responsibility to live out and teach faith at home. To put it in another way, "God has designed the church to shine a light to show every generation the glory of God's Son and God has designed the family to nurture the hearts of a generation to love God" (Joiner, p79).

Studies have also shown the power of family – the lives of young people are impacted more by faith lived out at home than church programs.

3. How do We Parent and Influence the Next Generation for Christ?

As how Gary Oliver in his book "Raising Kids to Love Jesus" put it, our primary call is not to parent but to have a "vibrant and vital love relationship" with God. This reflects what was said in Deut 6:5 to love our God with all our hearts, souls and might and then teaching it to our children. We have to do so because we cannot take others further than what we have gone through ourselves because



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we cannot lead where we have not been.

In order to bring up the next generation in a Christian home, we have to have God at home in our hearts because children can spot hypocrisy and empty religion. Live godly lives and be intentional by using everyday experiences to teach and nurture faith in our children.

Conclusion

Faith at home is living Christ out loudly every day, every moment. We are called to do so in both our families and circles of influence where we have the spiritual authority over. This kind of parenting is the only way that enables us to make a lasting impact on the current and generations to come, which the world cannot offer. We want to live out Faith@Home in BBTC as well so that our children will have a genuine and persevering faith in God. BBTC will continue to be a vibrant church that shares Christ as we mature in Him until the day He comes. We will fulfil the Great Commission and receive the commendation "Well done, good and faithful Servant", having shepherded the little ones whom He has entrusted to us.

Questions

1) How do you see your (physical/spiritual) parents living out their faith? How has their lives helped you in your journey of faith?

(Fill In Answer Here)

2) Why should we not outsource imparting and nurturing faith in our children to the Church?

(Fill In Answer Here)

3) Knowing the importance of living out your faith daily, share ways you can influence and nurture younger people in their faith.

(Fill In Answer Here)