

“Reversing Generational Consequences”

Ezekiel 18:1-4

Introduction

Generational consequences are the negative result of ingrained sinful behavioral patterns passed down from one generation to another. These consequences are God’s righteous judgment against the sins of parents and children (Exodus 20:5). All of mankind is affected by the original generational consequence. The Scripture tells us “...through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin,” (Romans 5:12). Yet there are instances when the preceding generation has received punishment for their own sins that creates predisposed patterns of sin that affect their children. (2 Kings 5:20-27).

In Ezekiel 18:1-4, Israel mistakenly assumed that they were guiltless and suffered only because of the sins of their fathers. That is why they believed the proverb, “The fathers eat the sour grapes, but the children's teeth are set on edge.” (Ezekiel 18:2) However, God was quick to answer them through the prophet Ezekiel. He reminds them that regardless of the patterns of sinfulness, to which a generation has been exposed, each one is accountable for his own sin, and it is the “soul who sins [who] will die.” (Ezekiel 18:4)

We too may have picked up generational curses from our parents, but it is important to remember that we are not trapped by the sins of our fathers. The next generation has both the responsibility and freedom to choose to follow in the direction of their parents or to break free by the cross of Jesus Christ. Many of us fall under the deception that we are held hostage to the sinful patterns of our parents. Yet the Scripture tells us that generational curses can be reversed. When Christ died on the cross, He became a curse on our behalf (Galatians 3:10-14). We are not held captive to sin, but free to choose Him. In order to break free we must believe, repent and learn to walk in the Spirit. Day by day we are dependent on Him to empower us to overcome what we feel like we can’t overcome.

Getting Started

1. Have you ever witnessed a pattern of sinfulness that seems to infiltrate your family? After hearing this message is it possible that this may be the result of a generational consequence?
2. Many use Adam’s original sin as an excuse for their own sinful choices. How does Ezekiel 18:1-4 dispute this claim?

Let’s Get Personal

1. Is there a specific sin pattern that you may have picked up from your parents? Are you currently dispensing those same patterns to any of your family members?
2. There are two things that hinder us from overcoming generational consequences: 1) at times we may say we want victory over a sinful pattern but we are not truly repentant, or 2) we may be deceived into thinking we are stuck in that sin and cannot get out. Have you ever received deliverance from a sinful pattern in your own life? How did you overcome these hindrances listed above?

Take the Next Step

1. If you feel stuck in a pattern of sinful behavior right now, take time to confess this in your group. Spend time in prayer for deliverance and healing.
2. What is one practical step you can take this week to reverse generational consequences in your own family? Share with your group for accountability.
3. Want to go deeper? Take time to look at the follow passages: Exodus 20:5; 34:6-7; Leviticus 26:39-42; Romans 5:12-15; Joshua 7:22-26; Deuteronomy 24:16; Ezekiel 33:14-15; Galatians 3:10-14; Acts 5:1-16.

Renew Your Mind

“Behold, all souls are Mine; the soul of the father as well as the soul of the son is Mine. The soul who sins will die. Ezekiel 18:4