

GOD'S RENEWAL FOR HOUSEHOLDS

"Part IV: Renewing Household Adults: Addressing Roadblocks - Overcoming An Ancestor's Rearing Errors"

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

(1) Mike Royko, in the September 12, 1994 issue of the Torrington Register-Citizen wrote a moving article on the death of an eleven year old, Robert Sandifer, of Chicago.

Robert was murdered after himself being suspect of murder. The background of this child is heart wrenching: his father used Robert as an ashtray, and Robert's mother was an addict.

Royko went on to detail the roadblocks that had kept Robert Sandifer in his hell-hole environment until death. The lack of foster homes, legal precedents inhibiting children being taken from abusive homes, the inability of even billions of dollars in Federal anti-crime money to affect human behavior had all kept Robert Sandifer in Chicago's delicate twilight zone as an at-risk child until death.

In a call of weary concern, Mike Royko concluded his article, saying, "So we can all mourn the short and sad life of Robert Sandifer. And point fingers at others and at ourselves. Then we can wait a few days for a new shocking headline and start all over again."

Question: Is there any way for a Robert Sandifer, or any other child with "baggage" from parental rearing errors ever to CHANGE into being a happy, mature adult?! If so, HOW?!

(2) African-American, Walter Williams, in his editorial, "'Social penicillin' for the underclass," in the Rep.-Am., Jan. 3, 1997, noted that right now, illegitimacy among **whites** in America is approaching 25 %. That's what it was among **blacks** during the mid-1960s, when now-Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan issued his first warnings about the collapse of America's black families. **Now** among **blacks**, young men in Harlem are more likely to die of violence than soldiers were in Vietnam! In Detroit, a 5-year-old was thrown from a 14th floor because he refused to steal. "In Chicago, police raided an apartment of five welfare sisters . . . Inside they found 19 cold and hungry children sharing food in a dog bowl with several dogs. Dazed, one kid asked a police officer, 'Can you be my mommy?'"

Since social disintegration is on the rise across ethnic boundaries, what about FUTURE generations of Americans?! How will THEY mature with such rearing errors going on with current children who are someday to be their PARENTS?!"

(We turn to the "Need" section of the sermon . . .)

Need: "The two lessons on renewing 'manhood' and 'womanhood' may help OTHERS, but I'm not so sure they can help ME! I have some character flaws that started as a result of rearing errors by my ancestors or guardian(s)! I WANT to be a well-adjusted adult, but these flaws are tough, ingrained behavior problems! What NOW?!"

I. As we noted in Part I, SIN caused all the wrong human behaviors:

- A. When God created humans, they were very wholesome, Gn. 1:27, 31a.
- B. However, **SIN** against **God** started wrong human characteristics:
 1. Adam had been created to be the leader of his wife, Gen. 2:23.
 2. When he **sinned**, he **followed** Eve's lead (3:6), turning even **more irresponsible** in blaming **Eve** for **his own** sin, 3:7, 8-12.
 3. Before eating the fruit, **Eve lied** about God's order, 3:2-3; 2:16-17.
 4. Then she **usurped** her role, leading Adam into sin, Gen. 3:6.
 5. When convicted, Eve **irresponsibly** blamed the serpent, 3:13.
 6. **SIN** led their **descendants** into murder and bigamy, eventually producing constant global violence, Gen. 4:1-8; 4:19, 23-24; 6:1-12.

II. However, those who believe in Christ for salvation FROM sin are equipped by God to live righteous lives with GOOD behaviors!

- A. By way of review, when one believes in Christ, he is **made** a new **creation** in his inner man, John 3:16 with 2 Cor. 5:17.
- B. In that renewal, the following provisions equip him to **live** uprightly:
 1. The believer is given a new nature to live uprightly, Rom. 8:3-5!
 2. God's Spirit comes to indwell for the **power** that energizes him to **will** and to **do** what is righteous, Phil. 2:12-13 with Gal. 2:20.
 3. God's **Word** is available for **insight** on specifics in daily living to **guide** the believer in achieving upright living, 2Timothy 3:16-17.
 4. If a believer **sins**, though he retains his salvation status (Ep. 4:30), he is powerless to act rightly **until** he **confesses** his sin, 1 Jn. 1:9.

III. Now, one may perform wrong behaviors since he has ingrained CHARACTER flaws from SUBCONSCIOUS learned responses to rearing errors by his ancestors or guardian(s)! Well, God has a program to counter even THIS challenge as follows:

- A. **Realistically, ALL** men in history carry *some* negative **character** flaws from the sin nature, Rom. 3:10-20; 7:18; Gen. 6:5; 8:21b.

- B. Yet, in **grace**, **GOD** sees to it that **all** experiences in **every** believer's life work to **conform** him to **CHRIST'S character**, Rom. 8:28-30.
- C. This is how it all works: (1) God uses life's events and Scripture to **reveal** to a believer his character flaws so that he might use God's "II,A,B" provisions to change; (2) Well, if he (a) **fails** at first to **heed** God (Ps. 32:3-9), or (b) needs pain to **attend to** a flaw (Heb. 12:6) or (c) demands trials to be able to **discern** areas to address (Heb. 5:8), God permits troubles in one's life to elicit the desired results; (3) If one **bucks** obeying God in the process, God **eventually, prematurely ends** his earthly life to rescue him from defeat, 1 John 5:16b; 1 Cor. 5:1-5.
- D. To **illustrate**, we review the case of a man who disrespected authority due to never being disciplined by his father, 1 Kings 1:5-53:
1. Adonijah, David's young adult son, did not respect authority and nurtured an inflated ego since David had never disciplined him, 1:6!
 2. For this reason, Adonijah rashly tried to usurp Solomon's throne:
 - a. He arranged a fanfare to sway public opinion his way, 1 K. 1:5.
 - b. He collected followers with a manipulative, festive rally, 1:7, 9.
 - c. He planned to overthrow Solomon and God's prophet, Nathan though **GOD** wanted Solomon on the throne, 1:8, 10 with Ryrie Study Bib. ftn.; 2 Sam. 12:24-25 with Ryrie Study Bib. ftn.
 3. **God** then parented Adonijah, impressing him to **respect** authority:
 - a. Nathan heard of Adonijah's plan and told David, 1 K. 5:11-14.
 - b. Led of God (Pr. 21:1), David crowned Solomon, upstaging Adonijah & forcing him into a showdown with Solomon, 1:32ff.
 - c. Terrified, Adonijah's followers abandoned him, 1 Kings 1:41-49.
 - d. Forsaken in his plot, Adonijah's only recourse was to seek merciful asylum in God's temple, 1 K. 1:50 (Ryr. Study Bib. ftn.)
 4. **Once** Adonijah was **SHOWN** he **should** submit, **God** mercifully gave him a 2nd chance to **adjust** and **live** submissively -- **or ELSE!**
 - a. Solomon could have **slain** Adonijah on the spot, but God led Solomon (Pr. 21:1) to put him on **probation**: from then on, if Adonijah submitted to Solomon, he'd live; if not, he'd die, 1:51ff.
 - b. Well, Adonijah tried to marry into David's harem (1:3-4) to gain the throne. Since Adonijah thus had **not** adjusted to **remain** under authority, God had Solomon (Pr. 21:1) **kill** him, 2:13-25!

Application: When one (1) believes on Christ for salvation, (2) God **automatically** becomes his PARENT to weed out his character flaws and conform him to Christ! (3) Thus, if as a believer we **KNOW** our flaws, in view of 1 Jn. 5:16b, we'd better address them NOW! (4) If we know of another with a flaw who seems I GNORANT of it, just follow God's leading in relating to him, for God's not done with him yet! Be sure to attend to **our own** flaws **FIRST**, Mt. 7:1-5!"

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

(1) In his editorial on January 3, 1997 in the Waterbury Republican-American, Walter Williams, himself of African-American descent, cited a study of black inner-city youth by Harvard University's Richard Freeman: "Boys who regularly attend **church** are 50 percent **less likely** to commit **crimes**. They are 54 percent **less likely** to use **drugs** and 47 percent **less likely** to **drop out** of school . . . churchgoing boys and girls are two-thirds **less likely** to engage in **teen sex**. Regular church attendance **halves** the chances that a woman will have a **child out of wedlock**." So, **Getting right with God and getting involved with others in church will curb our worst child-rearing needs.**

(2) Here are excerpts from a letter written to me by a party who was in the audience when I preached on "Reacting Properly To Our Parents' Rearing Errors" from 1 Kings 1:1-53 on a Sunday in 1989. This anonymous woman had suffered serious parental rearing abuses:

"Dear Reverend Shell . . . I want to share a brief history with you because of this Sunday's sermon . . . I have learned through the past 20 years to confront and change the really burdensome character disorders that plagued me. The process was slow and painful and I sought help from many secular methods. I want to add that I do feel most of the problems were due to parental error but I love and forgive my parents. All the anger has dissipated. All the past hurt is forgotten. How can this be? Was the Holy Spirit pushing me all along? I felt the need to strive and grow but in the process I took some very sinful turns. I think the Lord did bring [her husband] and me together which really saved me from a deepening path to self-destruction . . . I am now growing without the pain . . .

I am encountering Christians who have known the Lord much longer than I but cannot seem to let go of the past in behavior or thought. The tears have not dried and their hurt is ever-present. I used to feel the pain of remembering but somehow it is all gone . . .

I just provide this testimony for record. Perhaps you will encounter the need for it somewhere down the line.

Sincerely, [Name Withheld]"

With God as our new PARENT in Christ, we too can and should overcome all ancestral rearing errors that plague us!