sermon index
http://www.sermonindex.net/

Articles and Sermons :: Charles Spurgeonâ€™s Home Life by Denny Kenaston

Charles Spurgeonâ€™s Home Life by Denny Kenaston - posted by proudpapa, on: 2013/12/26 0:34

And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God,
I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh:
and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
and your young men shall see visions,
and your old men shall dream dreams....
Acts 2:17

There are times when great tragedy strikes that we must simply say, â€œGod is sovereign.â€• We all know times like th ese when we do not understand why God is allowing things to happen as they are. This also applies when miraculous th ings happen which defy our understanding. God is sovereign, and He can do whatever He wants. Spurgeonâ€™s life is one of those miracles. He preached his first sermon at the age of sixteen with anointing and zeal. By the time he was nin eteen, he was preaching to crowds of five thousand, turning many to the Lord. You say, â€œHow can this be?â€• I do n ot know; God is sovereign. The scripture above seems to give room for sixteen-year-olds preaching the gospel in like m anner. I must admit, I wish we had more young men who were so full of God and His Word that they cannot but speak.

When Charles was a young boy, he lived with his dedicated grandparents for about six years. Grandpa was a preacher of the gospel, a pastor of the same church for fifty-four years. While he lived with his grandparents, when he was about t en years old, a very unusual event placed an eternal stamp on his heart. A godly evangelist was staying at the home for a few days and took an interest in the hungry boy. Preacher Knill, stirred by the amazing hunger Charles had for Bible k nowledge, broke out in intercessory prayer for the lad. He finished by prophesying that the boy would love Jesus and pre ach the gospel in the largest chapel in the world. These prophetic words set the course of Charles Haddon Spurgeonâ€ ™s life. He began to dream dreams and see visions from that day forward. His heart united with the words of the Apostl e Paul who wrote of being separated from his motherâ€™s womb that he might preach the gospel to the heathen.

Godly Roots

God can do anything He wants to do with anyone He wants to use. It is worthy to note, however, how many times He re aches down into a godly family line to prepare a special servant. Spurgeon is no exception to this observation. Two hund red years of godly generations preceded him. Two hundred years before him, his forefathers sat in prisons for their faith in their native land of Holland. Those were days when men and women raised up repeated generations of children who f ollowed the Lord with their whole heart. The Spurgeon family finally left Holland with desires to live and worship God acc ording to their conscience, and they settled in free England. In the freedom of England, they continued to display solid C hristian convictions and a dedication to God that graced the family testimony all the way into the days of their famous so n.

Grandfatherâ€™s House, A Special School

While we can clearly see Godâ€™s divine stamp upon this vessel from an early age, it is just as clear to see that God u sed many human instruments to shape and mold this chosen vessel. Charles was one of sixteen children, born in a poor and humble setting like our Lord Jesus. Perhaps this alone explains why his grandparents raised him for six years. His p arents were poor and could not afford to provide for his needs. Whatever the human reason, God had His divine reason s for placing Charles under the care of this wise old preacher. He learned the Bible from Grandfather, who taught him fai thfully morning and evening. He learned about prayer from Grandmother, who sat before the fire in her rocking chair pra ying the hours away each day. In addition he learned his studies from â€œAuntie Annâ€• who homeschooled him faithfu lly for six years. The Lord ordered a beautiful blend of godliness for this growing preacher boy: the strength and characte r of a solid defender of the faith, the gracious love and tender care of a â€œProverbs thirty-oneâ€• grandma and the ord ered discipline of his intelligent aunt. Grandfatherâ€™s house was a special school for a little boy who had a holy calling on his life. Let us look at some the classes in this school.
â€¢ Grandpaâ€™s Study
The Father of Lights had His beautiful designs in Grandpaâ€™s study. Charles spent hours in this room reading many c ommentaries and theology books. This brought many questions to his inquisitive mind, and Grandpa was very willing to answer them. Imagine the natural training of a disciplined mind that took place during the important years of developmen

t.
â€¢The Setting of a Little Farm
Chores for the little boy built character that lasted all his days of public ministry. The cows had to be milked morning and evening, and many other responsibilities demanded the will to keep yielding. This is a most valuable school, one that ca n not be measured in money.
â€¢The Sitting Room
This is the room where visions were born in the heart of a young boy as he sat for hours listening to Grandpaâ€™s man y visitors. Preachers, missionaries and young aspiring students of the ministry provided much dialogue to ponder. As wis e parents, we should provide opportunities for this kind of interchange. If we will honor the godly in the hearts of our child ren, they will listen with reverence.
â€¢Bible Reading with Grandpa
This was one of Charles Spurgeonâ€™s privileged responsibilities while he lived with his grandparents. Morning and ev ening for six precious years, he was called upon to read the text out loud. This taught him to read the sacred pages with meaning and awe. He also had the liberty to ask any question he had about the particular text. When he was finished, G randfather expounded on the verses for the day.
â€¢Refined Character of the Aged
How many of us parents would long to give our children a more refined, mature Christian example? Spurgeon had the f atherlike care of a loving man, coupled with a godliness that flowed from years of walking with God. Grandmotherâ€™s example was just as clear and upright. This greatly challenges me, as I ponder my own children. I must give them a mat ure example to follow. Like produces like in all of Godâ€™s creation. In the same manner, godliness is passed on from one generation to the next by word and example.
â€¢The Fireplace
A healthy imagination is an important part of training and development in the life of a child. God uses many ways and m eans to stimulate free, imaginative thought. Three things stand as beautiful memories of the years at Grandpaâ€™s hou se. The rippling brook, Grandpaâ€™s prayer garden and, most of all, the evenings around the fireplace. It seems the ch anging images of a crackling fire stirred Spurgeonâ€™s imagination night after night. He referred to this fire continually d uring his many years of ministry.
â€¢The Ordered Life of Auntie Ann
Much is recorded about the influence that Spurgeonâ€™s grandpa had on him, and rightly so. He was clearly an instru ment in Godâ€™s hand to mold â€œthe prince of preachers.â€• Auntie Ann, however, probably had as much or more in fluence on him, as she was the one who guided his young life on a day-to-day basis. A quick mind and an ordered life w ere the strengths of her character. Young Charles benefited from all of this. While there were times of freedom to roam t he fields and meditate upon creation, she provided plenty of structure to the passing days. The security and the stability that this breeds are hard to measure.
â€¢One Holy Picture
There was a special picture that hung above the mantle of the fireplace. This picture had a most profound influence upo n Charles all his days. One thousand words flowed out of the picture of David and Goliath. Charles slew many giants as he sat by the fireside during evening meditation, and many more real giants fell at his feet during his years of ministry. B e careful about the pictures you place before your children. They are feeding from the messages the picture brings. Spur geon referred to this picture repeatedly in sermons for forty years. Is a picture just a picture? The answer is No, for a pict ure has a message in it, and our children listen to its message many times.
â€¢Sacred Solitude
Have you ever sat in the presence of a godly man while he was deeply engaged in meditation? There is a sanctified sile nce that is powerful. The manifest presence of God can be felt as the godly man ponders or silently prays. Charles had t his privilege many times. At first he was a noisy little boy who did not know what an opportunity he enjoyed. However, as time went on, he yielded to the silence and became a recipient of its glories. This happened scores of times when Grand pa was called upon to watch over the lad while the ladies were away. May the Lord help us fathers to provide such silen ce for our little ones.

Home Life

Though the school at Grandpaâ€™s house was rather impressive, Charles moved on to another school no less influenti al. He moved from a quiet, meditative home to a busy one with many brothers and sisters. Oh the manifold wisdom of G od! How beautifully He orders a life. Back at home, there is poverty. Back at home, there are many opportunities to shar e. Back at home, there is a reality of everyday life that will train him for life in the real world. The combination of these tw o homes is a perfect blend of his life and ministry. Two things made Spurgeon one of the most influential men of his day. He loved God with all his heart (the quiet meditative life), and he lived for others with all of his being (life in a busy home) . His days of successful ministry expressed a beautiful blend of these two great commandments. Again we can see God

preparing a servant in these very different godly homes. As parents, we can glean from both of these examples. There are times when we are tempted to think our large family is a hindrance to the children. We must resist this temptation and translate every day into learning experiences for our children. If they ever become mighty on this earth as God promises in Psalms 112:2, it will be because they have learned to live for others.

A Few Powerful Books

As I study the homes of godly men, I repeatedly see the influence of books. This is not a small issue in the training of the next generation. Readers are leaders, as the saying goes, but what kind of readers and leaders are we going to have? If we allow our children to read all the books filled with vanity, what kind of leaders will we have? We do not lack for books in this land of ours. However, we do lack for good, solid books that will guide the tender minds of our youth. Spurgeonâ€™s father provided the best books for his children to read. He was a poor man, but he placed a high priority on good reading material. Charles found a lifetime companion in Bunyanâ€™s Pilgrims Progress. He read it through once a year for his entire life. His father also bought books of the martyrs and current publications of evangelistic nature. It is written of Charles that he would sit and discuss theology with the men at the age of twelve. This follows the pattern of our Lord Jesus, who also astounded the teachers of His day with His knowledge of the Holy. The parents of both of these children watched over the precious, pure minds of their promising sons. We must follow their lead in this area. There is a desperate need to sanctify the bookshelves in many of our homes.

Father and Mother

It is easy to see how God used the ideal setting of Grandfatherâ€™s house to train and mold His servant. He also uses the less than ideal. I am glad for this because most of our homes fit into the second category. Spurgeonâ€™s father worked full time and did the work of the ministry evenings and weekends. Some of us know that this is not an easy task. There was not much time for his large family. (Praise God for his faithful wife.) Although John Spurgeon was busy providing for the family needs, he still made time for family worship, morning and evening. He was loved and reverenced by all of his children. They anxiously awaited his return home in the evening. They gathered with anticipation to hear the stories of the day and of his evening of ministry.

Mother was a saintly figure in the Spurgeon home. She brought her children before the Lord in prayer continually. Because of her husbandâ€™s busy life, she had to fill in the blanks with the children. I am sure there were times when she felt her husband should be home more. She did not respond with any bitterness. This would have made her life and influence of no effect with the children. Instead, she gave herself to the task and received the reward of praise from all of them. The example of this godly womanâ€™s life guided the family into the way of holiness. They sat at her feet to learn and gazed at her life and followed.

Training for the Ministry at Home

This last point in our study comes as a shock to many a preacher who trained for the ministry in a seminary. Spurgeon did not go to a Bible College to prepare for his lifework of preaching the gospel. Looking back over his life, it is very evident that he was trained for the ministry. The setting, however, was not very orthodox. He prepared at home. His father, his grandfather and his Heavenly Father oversaw his training. That is not a bad combination, is it? God, in His providence, would not let Charles Spurgeon go to a seminary. When others began to recognize the call that God was placing on his life, they quickly counseled him to get some formal training. As Charles began to pray about this major move in his life, he had no peace. This caused him to question the leading that he was getting. He sought God more earnestly, and while he was on a meditative prayer walk, God made it very clear to him. In Spurgeonâ€™s own words, â€œIt was as if God spoke audibly to me. â€˜Do not go to Bible College; trust me.â€™â€• That was all he needed; he never looked back. So he set out on one of the most far-reaching ministries a man ever had, without a degree. He had the Holy Ghost and the Holy Word abiding in his heart. It seems that was all he needed.

We live in a day when it can be dangerous to go to seminary. There are many good things imparted there; however, there are many things that must be unlearned after you have finished. I favor the type of training that Spurgeon received. We must remember that the early church had no Bible college. They had the Christ within them, and that was all they needed. We have not matched their effectiveness in two thousand years. Lord, lead us back to the old paths, wherein is the good way.
http://www.ephrataministries.org/remnant-2002-09-charles-spurgeons-home-life.a5w