

“PASSING ON OUR FAITH TO OUR CHILDREN” (A STUDY FOR PARENTS)



When it comes to passing on our faith to our children, how do we undertake this task? How can we be more effective? Do we teach or avoid the spiritual aspects with our children? Or do we think if our children are around other children in the church, that this rubs off on them?

Our faith can be passed on to our children. In **2 Timothy 1:5**, Paul reminds Timothy that His mother and grandmother’s faith was passed on to him. Our children are called. **Acts 2:38-39** reads, “...you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord Our God will call.” A converted parent really has but one course of action. He or she must follow Abraham’s example of teaching his children God’s truth. God revealed through the prophet Malachi that, “He seeks godly offspring”. (**Malachi 2:15**)

Yes, our children are called. But how do they learn the truth. They will not learn it from the world. Who is to train and teach them? God charges parents with the responsibility of teaching children His truth. **Deuteronomy 6:5-7** states, “And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down and when you rise up.” God puts this task solely on the parents. The church’s goal should be to supplement the parents—**not** take it over for them.

Teaching God’s truth must begin in childhood. **2 Timothy 3:15**, “...and that from childhood you have known the Holy

Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” Timothy had been taught the scriptures when he was a child. Our children are called as Timothy was called. However they will not absorb God’s truth by “osmosis” or by breathing the air in a church family’s home. They must be taught God’s truth!

God reveals Himself in the Bible. Every child needs to learn about God. Christ said ...“learn of me...” in **Matthew 11:29**. We must not let excuses keep us from fulfilling this responsibility



that God gives to parents. Some parents may say that their children find Bible study boring, but you can make it exciting for them through stories, games, etc. Other parents might say they don’t have enough time to sit down with their children and teach them. Providing our children regular instruction in God’s ways should be a priority in every parent’s life.

It is a serious error to assume that our children cannot understand the Bible. God commanded all parents of His called-out nation to teach their children about Him and His

(Continued on Page 3)

IN THIS ISSUE

ARTICLES

| | |
|--|--------|
| “Passing on Our Faith to Our Children” | 1, 3,6 |
| PERSONAL NOTE and “Pass It On” | 2 |
| Fall Holy Day Activity Sheet | 4 |
| Feast 2005 and Beyond | 5-6 |
| The Resource Corner | 6 |

Personal Note

Hello Everyone,

Our lead article titled "Passing Our Faith To Our Children" in this issue covers a very important topic that we need to understand as parents concerning how to pass on our faith to our children. And that's our desire, isn't it? We want our children to have the same opportunity that we have so as they grow and mature into adulthood they will seek the truth and want to be in the Kingdom of God too. This article explains that our children are called and it's our prayer that they will answer that call. Hopefully this article will help you as parents to pass along your faith to your children.

Another article by Diane Kleeschulte "Remembering The Feast—2005 and Beyond" talks about all the planning that goes on before the feast. But how much planning involves what happens when we return from the feast and the "gloomies" set in. How many times have you came home from the feast and right away, you feel let down. Diane has prepared some steps to take that may help relieve this "let-down" and help us get through the dark days of winter until the spring holy day season.

We have also returned The Resource Corner to this issue. There are several good web sites that have excellent materials available and some of these can be downloaded. Also I have included some information on the names of Bible Translations which I obtained from the United Church of God study that was used for the lead article. If you run across a good web site or other type of resource information that you would like to share, please send it to me at the address below. We are always on the lookout for good resource information.

I'm including below a list of web sites for online Bible sources which I didn't have room for on page 6.

www.christianbook.com

www.bibles.com

www.thomasnelson.com

www.amazon.com

www.bamm.com

Until next time,

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"Pass It On"

By Diane Kleeschulte

What are you truly thankful for this year? What blessings have you experienced? As you gather around the table of thanksgiving this year what can you offer to others as evidence that your God lives? (*Psalm 19; Psalm 95:2; Psalm 100:4-5*) Friends and family will be sharing their blessings; will you hear a testimony of their faith in their thanks?

This idea of thanks and thanksgiving sometimes is overlooked by the size of the turkey or the shopping on the following day. Some scurry around in such a state of unawares that the historic intent of the day escapes them. (Check an encyclopedia or the internet for specific historical records of Thanksgiving.) Prepare your hearts for the day by doing a deep reflection of what the Lord of your life has given you: healed illness and disease; protected loved ones; provided shelter, food, clothing, jobs; blessed you with the fellowship of brethren and a loving family.



But perhaps the most important blessing is the understanding of who He is and why He cares for us, His little flock. (*1 John: all*) Isn't that the first and foremost blessing we have to be thankful for in our lives, no matter what time of year? And what evidence do we have that He cares for us? He provided the sacrifice of His son, Jesus Christ, to bring us salvation by the shedding of His blood that we might have eternal life. (*John 6:53-58*)



Our lives then should reflect our thanksgiving before others so that they know each day we live is a testament of our faith in Him. (*2 Corinthians 9:15*) Ask yourself if this is so. Read the scriptures and find out how your life can be a walking testimony of faith. And when you are through, be a good steward of the Word- **Pass it on!**

"... but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be known unto God."

(Philippians 4:6) KJV

(“Passing along our Faith” - Continued from Page 1)

laws. We must remember the tremendous significance of our children being “called”. They are given the same ability to understand God’s truth and the same invitation to pursue it, and ultimately receive the Holy Spirit, as their parents were given. “For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the (believing) wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the (believing) husband, otherwise your children would be unclean, but now they are holy.” (*1 Corinthians 7:14*)



Due to free moral agency, which God allows us all to have, our children may choose not to pursue their calling in adulthood. But if they choose not to embrace God’s truth, let it not be because we did not teach them.

There are three major categories of imparting God’s truth:

1. **God’s Revelation-Teaching and Studying the Bible.**
2. **Our own walk with God - instilling God’s truth through example and conversation.**
3. **Instilling the habit of prayer.**

Under the first category concerning God’s Revelation, *Deuteronomy 6:6-7* states, “And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall **teach** them diligently to your children...” The word here translated “teach” is the Hebrew word, “shanan”, which means to sharpen, whet, pierce, or inculcate. The idea is to intensively impart instruction through the means of instruction that is more structured, as when we conduct daily family Bible Study. The idea behind the word “shanan” includes repeating or reviewing scriptures, and even the repetition of scripture in order to imbed the scriptures in the mind.

Basic subjects to cover include Proof of God’s existence, Reality of Satan, The foundation of the Old Testament, Basic History of Israel, The Ten Commandments and meaning of the Holy Days, Fundamental doctrines of God’s Church, Heroes of the Bible, The Gospels and Life of Christ, History of the New Testament, Basics and outline of prophesy, Personal Prayer, and whatever else your children may be asking about.

Each child should have their own personal Bible, one they can mark or write in, with thumb tabs. The New King James Version is a good choice for children to learn from. Try to establish a regular time for Bible Study. Sit at a table when possible. Keep the radio, television, computers off. Let the answering machine take your phone calls during this time, or take your phone off the hook. Start the Bible

study with a brief prayer together. Each child should have their own notebook. Give each child a set of colored pencils for marking his or her Bible.

You can always start with Genesis or read a specific book of the Bible. You can always review sermon notes from the previous Sabbath. Write out verses from scriptures you are studying. Study prophesy and church literature together.

The second category is our walk with God. We can instill God’s truth through conversation with our children.

Deuteronomy 6:7 “...and shall **talk** of them...” The word “talk” here is the Hebrew word “dabar”, which means to speak, declare, converse, command, promise, warn. This refers to teaching God’s truth during normal, daily conversation. God intends parents to be taking advantage of every opportunity throughout the day to reinforce and teach God’s words and laws.



- **“when you sit in your house...”**
- **“when you walk by the way...”**
- **“when you lie down...”**
- **“and when you rise up...”**

Our children need to know about our own personal, spiritual walk with God. (Examples: what led to your baptism, how God has answered your prayers, events which led you to doubt but God proved Himself to you, how He has corrected you, how God teaches you, etc.)

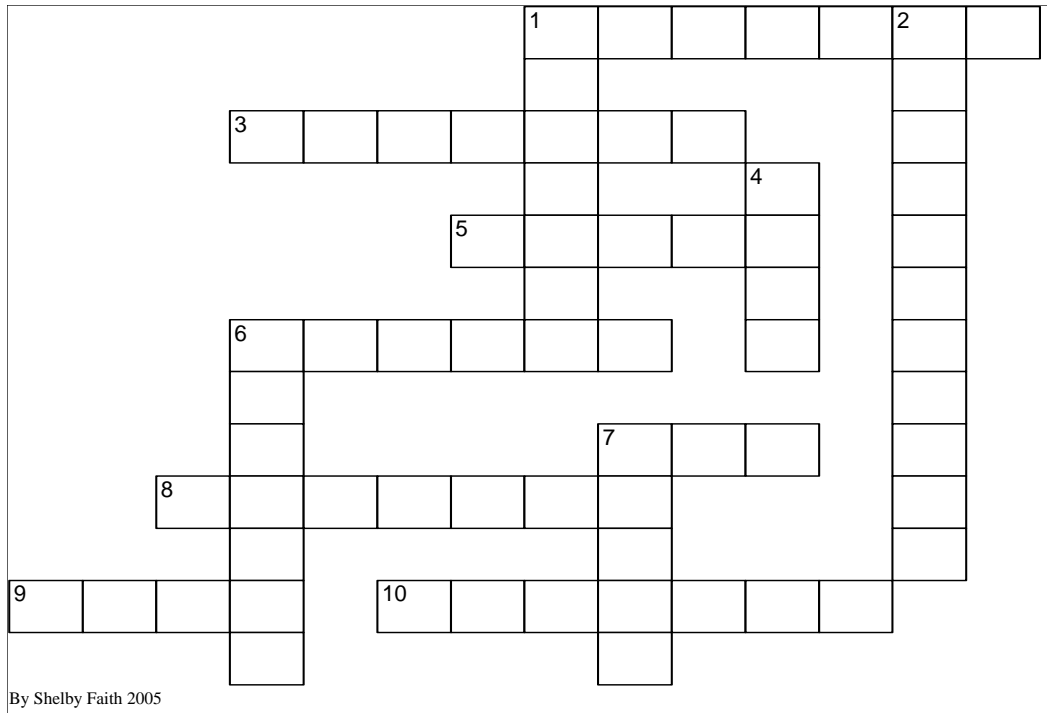
Each child has their very own personality, talents, traits and perspectives. Ask God to help you with your challenge to teach and train them. Find out what your children are thinking and feeling, their hopes and dreams, what they are watching, reading and listening to, who their heroes are, who their friends are, etc.

The third category of imparting God’s truth is to instill the habit of prayer into your children. Help them to understand that they can go to God for help and strength and that God wants a relationship with them. Let them see you pray and talk to God on a regular basis. Coach them in what to pray about and how to pray. Use the outline in *Matthew 6:9-13*.

Your children will be blessed and you will be blessed as parents if you accomplish imparting God’s truth to them. Remember *Proverbs 22:6*. “Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart

(Continued on Page 6)

Feast of Tabernacles Crossword



Across

- 1 the seventh day of week
- 3 to gather in the yearly produce
- 5 God's written word to us
- 6 parents and children are called a _____
- 7 happy activities
- 8 where people gather to worship God
- 9 what we eat to stay alive
- 10 how we give honor to God

Down

- 1 unique, different
- 2 a feast in the fall, also means a temporary dwelling
- 4 seven days is called a _____
- 6 people we like are called _____
- 7 a time for eating and enjoyment

Look at the clues above and choose a word from the word bank for each clue that is the correct answer. Write the word in the proper space in the crossword.

WORD BANK

- Bible
- family
- feast
- food
- friends
- fun
- harvest
- Sabbath
- service
- special
- Tabernacles
- week
- worship

“Remembering The Feast”

2005 and Beyond

By Diane Kleeschulte



Last weekend my family made Feast of Tabernacle reservations for 2005; excitement pervaded the house as we discussed the accommodations and the basic trip itinerary. Who doesn't just love getting ready for the Feast? Everyone at church asks each other the same questions: Where are you going? How are you getting there? When are you leaving? And the questions and inquiries go on for several weeks leading up to the Feast. Some people call this "Feast Fever". (*Deut. 16:13-15*) In other words, we are focused, tunnel vision, obsessive some might even say. Well whatever you call it, that's what we are each and every year when the Feast of Tabernacles arrives.

With as much planning that goes on before the Feast, though, we probably put very little thought into after the Feast. What am I talking about you may ask There are some who have shared that they feel depressed and moody before they even leave the Feast because they know what faces them when they get home: work, possibly, of some kind, but mostly the reality of the real world that they must return to. Maybe those of us that suffer the "gloomies" are in the minority, but I tend to think we are not. It is for that reason that I would like to share a few ideas and suggestions with you that might help keep the "gloomies" away after the Feast this year. Just as we prepare before the Feast, for the Feast, we can also prepare for after the Feast.



After almost two weeks of joyful celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles, it is very hard to return to the real world. For all of us it tends to be a rude awakening, like a splash of cold water to wake you up. (*I John 2:15a*) Adults and children alike go through a transition upon returning home. I hope some of these suggestions will make it easier to adjust to life after the Feast.

1. Before you leave decide on what you will have for your first meal home. From experience I can tell you that everyone will probably be satisfied with a simple meal: soup, sandwiches, etc. Or freeze a casserole before leaving home! Keep it simple! This can be a special "blessing" meal for everyone. (*Philippians 4:8*) Did you have a safe trip? Is everyone well or recovering? (The Feast tends to bring on unexpected illnesses!) Was the Feast itself a blessing, and were prayers answered

while you were there? Light a candle or two, have a special prayer, and then enjoy your first meal back at home. Topic of conversation? Next year's Feast, of course!

2. Buy a photo album and/or a scrapbook for your pictures and souvenirs. Try not to take the album or scrapbook with you to the Feast. Look forward at the Feast to returning home to create your Feast memory book to share with everyone at church. This too does not have to be complicated. The objective is to help your frame of mind upon returning home. You might find a great picture of you and a special friend at the Feast. Make a copy, frame it, and send it their way. What a great way to keep in touch with new friends you meet at the Feast! (*Philippians 2:1-4*)
3. Speaking of new friends, you can record Feast events and fellowship gatherings in a personal journal. This would be a diary/ address book. Meet new friends, jot down what you did together, and record their address. After you get home send a note reminding them of the good times you had together at the Feast. Don't forget to ask where they are going next year for the Feast. (*Prov.17:17a, Prov.17:22a*)
4. Before you leave ask if it is possible to have a special Sabbath class with all the kids within the month after you get home. Plan for this to be a "show and tell" Sabbath where they can talk about the special things they did and saw while at the Feast. We did this each year after the Feast and even the adults participated! When you know ahead of time about the show and tell, you tend to see souvenirs at the Feast sites in a different light! (*Deuteronomy 11:19-21*)



5. Feast sites tend to be located in areas that provide "natural" souvenirs: sea shells, rocks, leaves, etc. When you are at the Feast you can gather these natural souvenirs and plan to place them in what we used to call "shadow" boxes. This requires some forethought before you leave because you want to have just the right containers to keep them in for safekeeping on the way home. God's beautiful creation abounds! (*Genesis 1 and 2*)



6. Decide before you leave that you are going to keep your ears and heart open to God's messages at the Feast. Study on this topic while you are there, but plan


(Continued on Page 6)

("Passing on our Faith" — Con't. from Page 3)

from it." That's God's promise to us and our children. Count on Him to keep His promise if we do our job of teaching and training our children properly!

(Editor's Note: This article was prepared from notes taken by the editor who attended this study conducted by the United Church of God. This editor was given permission by the author to print excerpts from this study. If you would like a complete copy of "Passing On Our Faith To Our Children" Handbook and a copy of a handout titled "Marking In Your Bible" (also prepared by the UCG) please send your requests to the editor at the address on Page 2 of this newsletter, either by email or regular mail.)

("The Feast 2005 and Beyond" - Con't. from Page 5)

to investigate more thoroughly this topic or others after you get home. Some years it is obvious that God wants me to hear His word specifically on one topic or issue. While at the Feast there is time to do some studying, but I purposely plan a more in-depth study of one specific topic or more when I get home. One year it was the women of the Bible.  Buying a special notebook for my study was a definite priority! (*Mark 4: 24*)

These are just a few suggestions that I send your way that will hopefully give you some "gloomies" relief after the Feast. None require a lot of planning, but perhaps just talking about them and including them on a to-do list will make coming home a little bit easier. Someone once told me that a winter of darkness descends upon us after the Feast because it is so long until the Spring Holy Days. (*Mark 4: 21-22*) This is probably true to some extent, but it can be a little easier if we plan to use the time to remember His blessings, continue in fellowship with brethren, and study to learn more about Him and His Son, our Savior. Even though the days will be short and the nights long, we can still rejoice and say "Halleluiah, He is King!"

Happy Feast 2005!

The Resource Corner

Compiled By Shelby Faith

Web Sites:

www.ParentsAsTeachers.org (This web site covers a lot of information for parents, including parenting tips, simple everyday activities, child development expertise, local state and national resources and more.)

www.biblestudytools.net (This web site contains a lot of helpful tools in your bible study including various Bible translations, commentaries, concordances, dictionaries, encyclopedias, lexicons, history and other tools.)

www.cem.org (Christian Education Ministries have lesson books for the student and teacher including lessons for several age groups; Senior Teens (16-19), Intermediates (12-15), Primaries (6-8) and the age group (9-11 year olds). There is a nominal fee for each booklet and teachers' guidebook.)

www.ucg.org (This web site has many lessons, activities for all age groups which can be down loaded and printed out for individual use or class use. Also offered is a magazine called "Vertical Thought" for older teens and young adults.

Bible Translations:

New King James Version: An excellent choice for a "working Bible. Overall it is probably the best and most accurate modern English translation available.

New Revised Standard Version: Another good translation. Very helpful and will shed light on certain passages that may otherwise be hard to understand.

New International Version: A much looser translation – somewhere between a translation and a paraphrase. It can be a good choice for a children's Bible as it renders scriptures into understandable language.

Bible Paraphrases: Least reliable. The translators simply tell in their own words what they think the original author meant.

International Children's Bible, New Century Version: Each verse is re-worded in short sentences and utilizes a 3rd Grade vocabulary, easier for younger children to understand.

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And YOU!!