

Ten Steps to Produce Unfaithful Children

By Doug Hamilton

1) Do not admit your faults.

We are told in the Holy Scriptures to be a people that admit our faults to God and to our fellow man.

- 1 Jn 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
- James 5:16 Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed.

The first step in overcoming any problem is to admit that you have a problem. David said in *Ps 38:18 For I confess my iniquity; I am full of anxiety because of my sin*. How many times have we tried to cover our faults instead of owning up to them? Adam and Eve had a problem with this in the Garden of Eden when they used multiple excuses to try to avoid accepting fault for their actions.

- **They tied covering-up their nakedness:** *Gen 3:7 "...they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings."*
- **They tried hiding from God:** *Gen 3:8 "...the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden."*
- **They shifted the blame:** *Gen 3:12-13 And the man said, "The woman whom Thou gavest {to be} with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate." 13 Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" And the woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."*

Why wouldn't they just come out and admit that they went against the commandment of the Lord? It is in our human nature to not admit we are WRONG! What happens when our children, who are looking up to us, wanting to view us with the highest regard and seeing us make mistakes and not willing to simply say "I was wrong?" They see an inconsistency and learn an unhealthy pattern for themselves.

- Do you want children that are not afraid to admit to the Father that they are wrong?
- Do you want your children to have a spirit within them shifts the blame, covers up their sins, hides from God and fails to accept personal responsibility?
- Do you want your children to actually practice humility, something that is a great part of their future salvation in the Lord?

If you don't want your children to be in heaven, then stop admitting your short-comings and lay a foundation that will send them down the wrong path. Don't let them see that you are a "flesh and blood" human in need of forgiveness just like they will have to view themselves someday. Let them not learn the truth that we struggle just like the next person. Stop admitting your faults.

2) Do not pray with them.

Prayer is such an intimate part of a saved relationship with God. The Christian is to live a life of prayer ranging in plethora of situations and topics.

- We are to pray for our enemies (Mt 5:44), pray for our fellow saints (1 Th 5:25), pray for the spiritually sick (3Jn2), pray for the physically sick (James 5:14), pray for the spreading of the gospel (2 Th 3:1) and pray without ceasing (1 Th 5:17).

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- We can pray with two knees down on the ground (Eph 3:14), pray by fully kneeling down (Acts 20:36), pray in the prostrating position (Matt 26:39), pray in a standing position (Mark 11:25) and pray in a closet (Matt 6:6), our car, our house, somebody else's car or house, in a plane, train, boat or even while laying in bed.

Prayer is something that the faithful Christian can and should be doing on a regular basis in their lives. It is a life-line to the Father and it is our communication to Him. What happens when we make the choice to not or by default do not pray with our children?

- They will not likely choose prayer as a healthy coping mechanism to their difficulties.
- They will not likely benefit from its therapeutic value.
- They will not likely draw closer to God both mentally and emotionally.
- They will not likely take the right paths of life.
- They will not likely make it to heaven on that great Day of Judgment.

In Luke 11:1, the disciples begged Jesus to *teach them to pray*, and He did so. How many of our children will not make it to heaven because a parent said "NO" to that request by simply not carrying it out. If you wanted to make it tougher for your children to have a saving faith, then DO NOT PRAY WITH THEM!!! Do not take the time to show them how to pour their heart out to God.

3) Do not attend worship services regularly.

If you want to have unfaithful children in the future, I would recommend that you do not teach them to worship God as young children.

- The early church was told not to forsake the assembling together in Heb 10:25, for it was a source of encouragement that would fuel them to heaven.
- Act 2:42 states the early Christians "...were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer."
- We know from history, both biblically and secularly, that they met together on the first day of the week and on every week for the purpose of worshipping the Father. They sang hymns, prayed prayers, taught lessons, partook in communion and took up collections as a church family (1 Corinthians chapters 11-16).
- Meeting together was extremely important to them and was an incredible, intricate part of their relationship with God. Even in times of great persecution, when the church was meeting in catacombs and in underground caves, they were still carrying out worship to God.
- In the early church, the governments attempted to take the worship out of the Christian through intimidation by keeping the Christian out of the worship, but they were not successful.

If you want unfaithful children, then...

- do not be regularly bring your children to regular services.
- find other things to do during those times like sports or coloring books or other distractive issues that only serve to work against the child later on.

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- do not teach them a good example of being quiet in worship, singing the songs, listening to the sermon, breaking the bread and putting something in the offering dish.

If I wanted to have children that would drop the faith later on, I would put them in the future position where worshipping in spirit and truth would become meaningless and non-applicable. I would simply make worship not important to them. I would not regularly come to the services.

4) Do not participate in the youth activities.

The chameleon lizard possesses the unique ability to change colors to blend with their environment. If they are on a leaf, they turn green. If they are on the bark of tree, the chameleon turns a darker color to blend in. People are also like chameleons in that they take on their surrounding environments, including their peers. If you want your children to be on a worldly path, then surround them with peers that are on a worldly path.

- *1 Cor 15:33 Do not be deceived: "Bad company corrupts good morals."*
- *Prov 13:20 He who walks with wise men will be wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm.*

If you are not heavily involving your children in the lives of peers that are of a spiritual nature, then those children will tend to change to match that environment just like a chameleon. Can you think of a good source of spiritual peers for your children that they can spend time with? It is called a youth group. Why not have them spend time with the children of other parents that want their children to go to heaven.

- If you want to damage your child's future in Christ, keep them from the youth group.
- If you want to keep your child away from God, then do not personally be involved in the youth group yourself.
- If you want to weaken your child's hope of ever getting to heaven, ignore the youth group, refuse to start a youth group, neglect the youth group and your desire will become a reality.

5) Do not encourage regular Bible study.

Where are children going to learn to revere the scriptures if we do not do it ourselves? Do you think the secular schools will encourage your children to read the Bible? Do you think the video games or the television programs are going to be making the effort to educate your children in the ways of the Lord?

- Listen to the words of Paul to the Philippians: *Phil 1:9-10 And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, 10 so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ..."*
- Listen to the words of Paul to Timothy: *2 Tim 3:15 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation. (KJV)*
- Take the advice of God to Moses: *Deut 6:6-7 "And these words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart; 7 and you shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up.*

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Our children are watching and they know if we are taking the Bible serious in our own lives or not. If we are not studying to show ourselves approved, then why would they want to do this themselves? If we truly believe that the Bible is the book of life, then why do we treat it like the plague by staying away from it? Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God. If you want your children to be unfaithful, ignore the source of that faith, which is the Bible, and you will get your wish.

6) Do not give generously to the kingdom.

- *Matt 6:20-21 "But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; 21 for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.*
- *Acts 20:35 "In everything I showed you that by working hard in this manner you must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"*

What we choose to spend our money on really does show us where our heart is. If a person chooses to spend their money on drugs, alcohol, porn, frivolous items and those things of the sort, where is that person's heart? If we are spending our resources on helping the hurting, feeding the hungry, sending our kids to Bible camps, paying for missionaries and furthering the gospel of Jesus, where does it indicate our heart is? It does not take a genius to figure this out.

Do you think our children see this? Our children know us better than nearly anyone else on the planet. They have seen you in your pajamas and even less. They have seen you with messed up hair and unbrushed teeth. They hear things we say and our reactions to everyday struggles of life. Do you think they are ignorant to our giving habits? Do you think they know whether or not you are a giving soul? Give them some credit. If our children do not learn from us how to be a cheerful giver, they will have to learn it later by themselves. It might be too late by that time.

Jesus said it is more blessed to give than to receive. It is a large part of whom the Christian is and where that Christian will go in life. If you want unfaithful children, then become a cheapskate for the kingdom of God, and you will get your wish.

7) Do not live a godly life.

Speaking of our children watching us, what are we displaying about our general way of life? They need to know that we are not living the life of a hypocrite, but a life which emanates the glory of Jesus.

- *Matt 5:16 "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.*
- *Phil 2:15 that you may prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in this world.*

This is one of the greatest spiritual killers of our children, failing to take serious our walk with Jesus. **Do as I say and not as I do!** That sounds great on paper, but is utterly destructive in the end for our offspring. If we are not going to walk in the light like Jesus was in the light, then why would our children take it serious?

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8) Do not support the leadership.

In Numbers 16, there was a man named Korah who organized a rebellion against the chosen leaders of Israel, Moses and Aaron. He organized a movement that spread and he swayed the people in the direction that they need not to go. God took it very seriously, bringing destruction to all those that undermined Moses and Aaron. The scripture has always been clear about following and supporting your godly leaders.

- *Heb 13:17 Obey your leaders, and submit {to them}for they keep watch over your souls, as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.*
- *1 Tim 5:17 Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching.*

What happens to the children in the family when the parents undermine the leaders? Don't you think that the children are more apt to show disrespect for godly authority in the future when they are taught this by mom and dad? Take it from a preacher, when you serve "Roast Preacher", "Roast Elder", "Roast Deacon" and "Roast Teacher" to your children for Sunday lunch, you have just undermined the greatest support team that your children will ever have beyond you. Have you ever served "Roast Leader" to your children? Here are some of the more popular recipes served before the children in the car on the way home from Sunday services.

- "I just don't agree with the decision the elders made about this. Are they out of their minds?"
- "That preacher is a jerk! How dare he preach about that subject!"
- "The deacon in charge of this ministry is about as worthless of a leader!"
- "How dare that teacher correct my child in the classroom!"

This is not saying that you should blindly support a bad leader, but that you should not assassinate their character behind their back. The greatest attribute that leaders possess is the ability to lead other souls in the right direction. We might not always agree with our leaders, but if they are leading souls and some of those souls are our children, then to undermine their authority is to undermine your child's direction in the future. If you want to have an unfaithful child, then undermine the leadership of the church and your goal will be met.

9) Do not allow them to be tested.

You do not know the strength of a teabag until it is placed in hot water. The same is true for the child growing up in the normal circumstances of life. They have trials just like everyone else and in these trials they learn lessons of life that will serve them well into the future. We are a people that grow strength through trials.

- *James 1:2-3 Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.*
- *1 Pet 4:12-13 Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; 13 but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing; so that also at the revelation of His glory, you may rejoice with exultation.*

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The problem occurs when a parent will shelter their children from the natural consequences of life. They are constantly hovering over them and are ready to rescue at the first sign of trouble. Take for example when a child has poor behavior in school and is given detention. The parent does not like the idea that their child messed up, but blames the school for the problem. Or perhaps a child is doing something that results in damage to the neighbor's home like a broken window. The parent steps in and pays for the window or tells the child not to worry about it.

Many times there are biblical lessons to be learned from trials and tests, but they will not learn them when the child is protected from all the consequences. What would have happened to the prodigal son of Luke 15 had the father taken the son's position in the pigpen? What would have happen if he did not allow his son to *come to his* senses? He would have never won the son over in the end. If you want to produce unfaithful children, do not allow them to be tested.

10) Do not properly convert them.

It is an undisputable fact of the gospel that a person must accept Christ as Lord, must be of a repentant heart and must enter the covenant of God through making themselves in the likeness of Jesus' death, burial and resurrection (i.e. baptism), living the rest of their lives for Him.

- *Mark 16:16 "He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned.*
- *Rom 6:3-4 Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? 4 Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.*
- *Acts 22:16 'And now why do you delay? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name.'*

We have a tendency to expect that a child is ready to be baptized when they are 12. Where does it say that a child is ready to comprehend the greatest and most powerful message on earth at twelve? Some Christian parents baptize their children as early as 8 -10 years of age, but does that always make sense? Let me share a few experiences that I have had while being a minister in the Lord's church:

- Once while quizzing a ten-year old on why he wanted to be baptized, he eagerly and scripturally answered, "Because I want my sins washed away." When I asked him what sins he would be most happy to have forgiven, he responded, "I do not have any sins yet, but when I do, I want to know they are forgiven."
- Once a twelve year old requested to be baptized and I asked her why? She said that it would make her mother happy and very proud of her. She had witnessed a joyous parent of a classmate doting over their child from the week before when being baptized and thought it would also make her parent joyous.
- A thirteen year old asked to be baptized, but did not believe she was that bad and that Jesus did not have to die for her.
- One man that I met in prison was raised in the church. He was baptized when he was eight years old, but never really took on the faith. When discussing this for a few hours, he explained that he never really felt like he had a relationship with God and was baptized because he wanted to feel like he belonged.

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What do you think happens when someone is baptized for the wrong reasons or with the wrong logic? Do you think they run the risk of building their house on the wrong foundation? Do you think they will stumble when the real troubles of life occur?

If you want to produce an unfaithful child, allow them to enter ignorantly into the greatest agreement that God has ever afforded man. Let them build their gospel house upon an unscriptural foundation and watch what happens. Unless they are personally going to accept responsibility for Jesus having to come into the world and having to die for them, they will not be willing to live for Him. Unless they are going to put their entire trust in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ, they will not be able to accept their personal obligation to walk in the light. As soon as they grow old enough, they will realize it was not real to them and head for the back door with their new freedom. Baptize them too young and without understanding and you will receive your wish of producing unfaithful children in the future.

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7. Do not live a godly life.
8. Do not support the leadership.
9. Do not allow them to be tested.
10. Do not properly convert them.

There you have it! Ten steps that you can take that will more than likely produce children that will be unfaithful, unfruitful and unsaved children. How many of these steps in the past or presently are carrying out? Are you willing to repent and turn from this behavior for the sake of your children? Are you willing to make this investment in you children starting today?

Tonight Brian is going to share with you twenty-five years of research from our own youth group that will more than confirm this lesson this morning. You do not want to miss this for it is sobering, compelling and motivating.