***Lights in the World - PH43-01

Advanced Bible Doctrine - Philippians 2:14-15***

I would like to remind you again today that the Word of God is for everyone. There are many people who think that if they're not college graduates, that they are incapable of in-depth study of the Word of God. I completely and totally reject that concept. I would therefore suggest that whatever your educational background or whatever your level of mental ability is, that it would serve you to a good purpose to attend these studies. First of all, you need a Bible.

Secondly, you need something in the way of a pencil and a piece of paper to jot a note occasionally of something that strikes you as being significant. It is important in spiritual things to jot down the things that come to you. I know that this is not easy to do. I have pretty well finally schooled myself that no matter where I am, what I am doing, when a thought occurs to me, I stop and write it down. I have lost more gems of wisdom than I can imagine, all because somebody said something that came into my mind; something was illustrated; something was illuminated; and, I thought, "Now, that is good. I'm going to use it." Then when the time came to use it, I couldn't remember it. It's like having a dream. It's a very exciting thing, and you get up the next morning, and you're like Nebuchadnezzar: "What did I dream? I don't know." You lost the whole thing. So jotting down helps you to preserve it. Eventually, what is in the form of divine viewpoint, stored in a notebook or on a piece of paper, does get into your soul.

You who are fathers, I would suggest that you discuss with your family what you have been taught. It would help you too. So what I'm saying is that I respect your capacity to learn the Word of God, providing you meet the criteria of the Word of God, namely that you are a born again believer and that you are in fellowship. As a born again believer, you have a living human spirit in fellowship. God the Holy Spirit can be your teacher, and He's the only teacher that you can have in spiritual things. The Bible makes that very clear, that He is the one who will teach you. You have many vehicles for the information, but only He can teach you.

So I respect your need for doctrine, and I respect the workability of God's grace system that He has provided for anybody to learn doctrine. So you would do yourself a favor to get with it. At the same time, I call your attention to the fact that you should give other people the same favor by enabling them to get with it.

Part of teaching the Word of God through my frame of reference includes one thing that I get pretty regular static on. That is life applications of doctrinal truths. These applications include national and international political applications.

When I was a student in the second largest high school in the city of Chicago, Austin High School, I was taking a course in chemistry. I think I was a junior. I had a chemistry teacher who would come into class, and very frequently he would spend some of the opening time in a discussion of the current political scene, which was in the years immediately before World War II. He was discussing what Japan was doing. He was discussing what was happening in Germany. He was discussing what was happening in our military services, where we were having recruits in the army, and we were giving them, believe it or not, wooden toy guns to practice with because the American military arsenal was not stocked sufficiently with weapons (the old Springfield rifle at the time) for them to be able to use in drill and in their training.

One time, I recall so distinctly, he said, "Now it may seem that we should not be speaking about these things in a chemistry class, but we should be talking about chemistry. However," he said, "I feel that it will do you little good to know about the chemical equations involved in the decomposition of your bodies on the battlefield. But how you got there and how it became necessary for you to face that battlefield, that might be of some importance to you, and perhaps we can escape your having that in your future."

Well, the truth of the matter was that as teenagers, we kind of ignored that. Little did we know what was in store for all of us in that classroom. Indeed, some of the people who sat around me that I knew ended up in decomposition on a battlefield. He was right. It was important what we were studying in chemistry class. But the world in which we lived gave context, substance, and purpose to what we were studying. He was rightly trying to relate it. If he was doing that in chemistry class, you could see how much more it was of importance that we do it in Bible class.

So you don't have to agree with me. As a matter of fact, you don't even have to like me. You don't even have to welcome what I say. All you have to do is consider it in the light of Scripture--not in the light of your emotions and not in the light of your past, but in the light of Scripture. Running away from what is an unpleasant idea; an unwelcome idea; or, an unthinkable idea is a sure way for you to miss the truth. While you may turn your back upon it, that will be of no loss to me in heaven, but it will be a very great loss to you someday. For you have one examination, and the whole course of your life rides on just one exam. Don't ever forget that. At the Judgment Seat of Christ, at the "bema" in Heaven, there is one exam, and all of eternity's rewards for you are settled once and for all, never to be changed one bit.

So you have a great deal at stake, because the only way you're going to get oriented to where God can pull out His grace into your life now and reward you with his infinite grace of multiplied unending blessings for all eternity is to the extent that you build capacity in your soul through the intake of the Word of God. That's what we do in these studies. While sometimes it may seem heavy and tough to follow, that's the only way that we're going to get it.

**Morality**

We have seen in our current studies that the Bible presents a definite standard of morality. Morality (what is right and wrong) can be studied from both the Old and New Testaments. The moral standards in both testaments is the same because both testaments reflect the character of God. What is right and what is wrong is based upon what God is. We are currently studying God's morality under the principles of the Ten Commandments from the Old Testament, which is one way that we can study it. All these things, of course, are repeated in the New Testament as well. But everybody knows the Ten Commandments, and it is a convenient summary of principles under which many sub-factors fall that illustrate these ten principles.

In a modern society such as we live in, it is important to teach people God's moral absolutes--these principles of right and wrong. But it is also important that our society reflect its respect for what God says is right and wrong relative to its laws; its customs; and, its practices. There is no ground of morality apart from the Bible. When you get away from the Bible, you simply have relative morality, and it amounts to nothing more than what people think. Thus, humanism, which has rejected the authority of the Word of God, says, "Do whatever you please. Do what you want to do." When man does that, he comes to unbridled self-assertiveness. What he does in time actually violates every moral principle of the Word of God.

So unless the citizens of a nation as a whole understand and respect God's morality, even laws will not save our society. In the Old Testament, the Jews were promised physical health; material prosperity; and, happiness if they destroyed the moral evils of the Canaanite civilization whose land God had brought them into. To the extent that they destroyed that Canaanite civilization with its immorality, they were safe and they prospered. To the extent that they did not, the very thing that God promised them: good health; financial prosperity; and, happiness in their lives, all of that was lost to them and caused great unhappiness.

Deuteronomy 7:12-16 spell this out in very definite detail. They could have saved themselves a lot of grief had they understood that we know what God says is right. Now we must, by laws, reflect that we also believe that our society should recognize these moral laws and respect them. So here's the point. It is a fallacy to think that maximum freedom is when a person is as free to do what is evil as he is to do what is right. We have been reared on that idea--that maximum freedom is freedom to do whatever you want that is vile, wrong, and evil, as it is to do what is right. That is not so.

You could just see where this leads. Actually, you must say that God, who can do no wrong, has no freedom at all. God cannot do wrong, so God must be the biggest slave in the universe. He must lack the utmost in freedom. The same thing applies to you and me. Freedom means freedom to do what is right, and to avoid that which is wrong. Our Constitution in this country, for example, can protect our rights as citizens, but it cannot establish a moral fiber in us. A nation cannot remain neutral on biblical morality without, in time, actually turning against those principles of morality.

That's what's happening to us today. We have become so neutral on morality, and we have become so obsessed with this humanistic idea that we must let people be as free to indulge in evil as to do what is good that now we have in truth turned as a nation against the principles of morality. Now our governmental bodies are making decisions that would have been unthinkable from a moral standpoint just a few years ago. And it's going to get worse. It's the old sin nature in humanity that makes it necessary for people to have guidance as to what is right, and to protect them from evil.

All of us readily see that we want to protect our children from this. We don't think that prostitution should be established on high school campuses in order that students would have maximum freedom to do what is evil so that they have real freedom. Obviously, they should be protected from that. Do we need any less protection from that out in society, or anything else that is to the destruction of home; happiness; family; marriage; the rearing of their children; and, the general welfare?

That's why we are studying principles of morality. After we have studied them, we have one other problem. How do we get this to work in society itself? How do we get this to operate and to function within the structures of government that make so many decisions concerning our lives? It is easy to choose the wrong, but it is hard to follow the right. There are more wrong ways of doing a thing than there are right ways, and it's not always clear to us which is which without some outside help. Freedom ultimately means choosing the right. So a society should make laws to make morality a desirable practice, and to make it harder to be immoral. That's what I'm saying.

The United States may have gone beyond the point of no return both in public and private morality. An item in the local Irving paper announced that a group of women had created a movement in order to stop the pornographic displays at the newsstands. If you haven't noticed it, all of a sudden, almost overnight, the worst kind of pornographic material is right out there in open display for any kid or anybody to get at. I hope the ladies can do something about it. But it's a reflection that in our society, morality, as spelled out in the Word of God, is dismissed and rejected.

It is unbelievable to think that one million Americans are slaughtered in this country every year before they have a chance to take their first breath. These one million abortions are a common fantastic practice. The United States now leads all nations of the world in abortions except, interestingly enough, some of the communist nations. One nation has 122.5 abortions to every 100 live births. There are more babies killed than they allow to be born. The number in our nation is rapidly rising.

That reflects a people who have degenerated to where their respect for biblical morality is practically gone to the point where they cannot return. The reason God destroyed nations in the past, great empires, is because they lost their moral orientation.

Criminal indulgence is absolutely fantastic. I read a fascinating article written by a professor of criminology in Florida this past week. He performed an experiment. He decided that he was getting a lot of static from policemen who were in his classes on what he was teaching them. He would say such things to them that as, "Any policeman who loses his cool when he's on duty has no business being a policeman". He talked about police brutality and so on.

So finally, he decided to be a policeman. He did. He went through all the routine. He was 30-something, so the physical part was a little rough, but he went through the whole program. He finally got his uniform and his badge, and he got out there into the field. The details of his experience are fascinating. Step-by-step he realized how out of touch he was. He couldn't believe how the people he would arrest would go free so quickly. A group of characters had beat up an old man that he knew well, and had robbed him and practically killed him. He had arrested them. The next day they were on the street and they saw him, and they called a few obscene remarks to him and made fun of him. The judges were turning back loose the criminal out on the streets for more victims.

On one occasion, while off-duty, he caught two teenagers robbing a warehouse. He was with another officer who was also off-duty. So they went up and showed their credentials that they were police officers, and asked them what they were doing. The teenager looked at him; jerked his arm loose; and, turned to walk off. The professor said that in that moment, he grabbed that kid; shook him; and, said, "I'm talking to you, punk." He pulled his fist back, and then he felt the arm of the other officer on his, saying, "Take it easy, John." Then he said, my words came to haunt me, "Any police officer who loses his cool has no business being a policeman." He couldn't believe how the thin blue line that protects our freedoms internally is abused in the field out in society. Why? Because we have become so disoriented from the moral principles of the Word of God.

So how are we going to get back? We have come so far. This means recognizing that God is the true God; the Bible is His book; and, our allegiance to Him and to His book must be supreme. It must find reflection in our institutions; in our government; in our business; in our education; and, in our entertainment. When these principles are violated, people need to stand up and say, "Enough is enough." You may want to plow through the pig sty, but God says, "If you keep doing it, you will become a pig yourself. You will fall to an animal level, and then you will be ready for destruction, which is all the future that any animal has.

So we come back to the local church with real expository preaching as the only hope for a nation that's lost its way. May I remind you that the famous leaders of our day, as unbelievers, are all going to repeat the experience of the rich man in the incident of the rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16:19-31? Read the story again. See how pathetic it is for that rich man to discover that God is there, and that there is a judgment. I don't care who the famous personality is in government; in entertainment; or, in any place in business. Every time you hear the famous person who has died in this nation, always go back to Luke 16 and remember the story of Lazarus and the rich man, because every famous person whose name is on everybody's lips, and who is esteemed by everybody and who may as a human being, have been a very commendable person, every one of them is going to reenact the role of the rich man. Do you realize that?

These are all unbelievers. They are people who are rich and people who are in power in government circles; in social circles; or, in one place or another in our society today, but who are unbelievers. And because of that, they can only operate on human viewpoint, and thus they are leading us today from human viewpoint frame of reference that has its effects on morality and on everything else. When they die, they will repeat the identical experience of the rich man as he discovered how real God was and how real His absolutes were. The worst part about it is that every one of them is going to think back of a wife; of a husband; of a son or a daughter; or, or other people that they esteem, and they're going to be screaming out, "God, how can I get the word to them that they should not come to this place of torments in which I find myself? How can I get the word to them?

Well, the rich man asked it. Do you remember the answer that Abraham gave him? "They have Moses and the prophets," which means Bible doctrine. That's what they've got. That's what will keep you from hell. That's what will keep you from wasting your life so that you enter eternity as a spiritual popper, rather than one who is enriched at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

Now, I hope that I have, in some degree, enabled you to see how important it is for you to be a daily feeder upon the Word of God. It is the only thing that can sustain you. If our nation comes to the place that a lot of knowledgeable people think it's going to come to the immediate months which lie before us, God help you if you are not oriented to the Word of God, and if you are not steeped in doctrine. Because I'll tell you right now that it's the only thing that will enable your mentality to click with the right answers and with the right decisions--when you can think God's thoughts after Him. The only way you'll be able to do that is when you are receptive to the Word of God and have taken the trouble to learn it. I don't care how old you are; how long you've sat around; and, how much instruction you think you have. Nobody can go without spiritual food on a regular basis and survive. The local church is where it all begins for a nation and a people who have lost their way.

The first commandment we found forbad having any other God beyond Jehovah Elohim. All others are figments of your nature. Loyalty to false gods results in the loss of freedom.

The second commandment forbad the use of idols in worship. That is, not to make images of anything in nature as representation of deity. The Scripture says that we are not to let ourselves be caused to worship before an idol, even if it's called Jehovah Elohim. Idol worship is in reality demon worship. The Israelite people were free from Egypt, but they had idol worship steeped deep in their souls from their experience in Egypt. So they readily turned to the worship of the golden calf. The reason for their idolatry was that emotions rather than mentalities guided by the Word of God were governing them. Consequently, when the mind does not govern, the thing that takes over is the emotions.

In Exodus 32:6, we read, "And they, after Aaron built the golden calf for them, the people rose up early on the next day, and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings, and the people sat down to eat and to drink (and here's the kicker), and rose up to play." And that means a group sex orgy. That's what was being done in the process of worshiping (mind you), Jehovah Elohim through this golden calf. Why were they doing this? Because they were looking for kicks, and they had it all over the place. Inside and outside every tent and all over the surroundings, they were getting the huge emotional kicks.

We have modern day versions of this desire for the emotional kicks sharing under certain guises of spiritual experiences, which is a lust for emotional type of expression. After a few sharings, you run out of things to share, so you begin to invent things to keep your emotional lust satisfied. The illusion of spirituality and closeness to the Lord you don't have, but your emotions devise ways to give you the impression that you have. We're learning Bible doctrine principles in order to keep us from making the same mistake that the Jews did in order to control our emotions so they are not manipulated by Satan. I didn't say, "In order to keep us from expressing our emotions," but, "To keep Satan from manipulating them."

So God has a judgment on idol worship. In Exodus 20:5, we read, "Thou shalt not bow down yourself to them (idol gods), nor serve them." Why? The consequence of idolatry here in the last part of verse 5 is, "For I, the Lord your God am a jealous God." "Jealous" is the Hebrew word "kanna." What this means is "no rival." This Hebrew word "kanna" means, "I will have no rival." God will not permit this honor, which is due Him, to be transferred to another, because none other deserves His honor as the Supreme God, because beyond Him, there is nothing to give this honor to. We have this in Isaiah 42:8 and Isaiah 48:11. God will not tolerate worship due Him to be given to idol gods who indeed represent demons. You cannot love God and bow in worship to an idol. The Bible says that is spiritual adultery. The word God is "el." It is the name for God, signifying power and strength.

**The Four-Generation Curse**

We come now to the four-generation curse. He says, "I am a jealous God, visiting..." The world "visiting" is "pakath." "Pakath" here connotes punishment. God himself disciplines any worship through an object of an idolatrous nature, or even to an idea which can also be an idol. The thing He is speaking of here is in the "Qal" which means that it's a basic stated principle. It's active. That means that God Himself does it. It's participle. It's a principle of what God will do. The iniquity of the fathers is the sins of the parent upon the children, the offspring of idolatrous parents.

Verse 5 says: "I am a jealous God, visiting (punishing) the iniquity of the fathers (the sins of parents) upon the children (upon the offspring)." This divine judgment goes as far as the great-great-grandchildren of a couple. Notice that it says, "Unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me." "Of them" is the little Hebrew word "le." It means in relation to. It refers to the children. Notice that is very important here. It is in relationship of God's judgment for four generations in respect to the children of each generation who do what? Who hate God. The Hebrew word is "sane," and it means simply "to hate." It means a bitterness and antagonism toward God. But the word "le" indicates that it is referring to the children. It is in relationship to the children of each generation who hate God. It is active which indicates that they do their own hating. Each generation does its own hating. Each generation in itself is negative toward God. You may read about this in Deuteronomy 24:16 and Jeremiah 31:29-30.

What this is referring to is the divine judgment on children who are negative to God in the pattern of their parents. You tend to follow your background. All of us do. You may happen to have a father who does not care about God. And please remember that in spiritual things, neutrality is equated to negative volition. Neutrality is equated to antagonism. You could use another word here for "hate." In English, we could say "neutral." If you are neutral toward God, you hate. So don't try to cover and say, "Well, I'm not for it, but I'm not against it." If you have parents who are not definitive in their stand on spiritual things, you're in trouble, because now you have an influence upon you that is diametrically opposed to God's viewpoint, and you're going to have to do something about it.

Otherwise, you will follow a chain reaction that could go from you to your children; to your children's children; and, to their children, right down to the fourth generation beyond you. It is return to Bible doctrine and to positive volition to the Word of God that breaks this chain at any point. However, it will not go beyond the fourth generation. That's what this passage is saying. At that point, God will wipe out of existence that particular family line. He will destroy the line, and it will not go beyond the fourth generation.

Here are the mechanics. We can look at this from Proverbs 30:11-14 which spell out for us this four-generation curse. First of all, we begin with parents. These parents are negative to the Word of God. These parents hate God in their own right. They have rejected the Word of God. This is the first step toward termination of this family line. Proverbs 30:11 says, "There is a generation that curses their father and does not bless their mother."

**The First Generation**

Let's look at generation number one. The first decadent generation are the children of these parents. What is their reflection of their parents' negative volition? They reject parental authority. That is the first step of parents who are not oriented to the Word of God. Their kids will reject parental authority. This, of course, means that they will not only reject the authority of their parents, but they will reject the authority all the way down the line throughout all the institutions of society. The first step is rejection of parental authority. It is natural for a child to obey his parents. This is God's chain of command within the family. Disobedience on the part of children must be corrected, or the child will be a rebel toward all constituted authority in society.

**Parental Authority**

So here you have reared a child. I will not get involved here in describing to you the terrors that some kids are, and what some parents have permitted their children to do, particularly as they get older and they move into their teenage years. The father is out there working, and he's tied up. The mother is tired at home. It is fantastic the murder that children can get away with, especially when there are several kids in the family. Fathers do not stop and say, "I don't care how tired I am. I don't care how much pressure I'm under. I'm going to come home and I'm going to take charge of my kids." Do you know how you take charge of your kids? When they're little, it's not so much of a problem. When they're teenagers, you tell them what to do; where to go; how to act; what to say; and, everything. You tell them, "Don't blow your nose without clearing it with me--right or left nostril."

If you don't understand that, you may have cause to regret it. Your son or your daughter, after they get out of the teenage years, may look back upon you with a loathing because you did not stand up to them and help them to invest their lives in worthwhile things: to be where they should be; to be doing the things they should be doing; and, to be associating with the people they should be associating with. But I'm not going to get off into that. I could have a great deal to say to you on that. Maybe I'm mellowing now. I used to come down pretty hard on this in years past, but I'm not going to do it anymore.

The first decadent generation in verse 11: they reject parental authority. Correct your children, and see that they do what they should do. Instead, here's what they do. It says, "They curse their parents." The word "curse" is the Hebrew word "kalal." This is in what is called the "piel" stem in the Hebrew. "Piel" is intensive. That means the word is to curse vehemently. I mean they may really sound off to their parents. Cursing is not only swear words and obscenities. It means telling your parents where to head off, and your parents take it. It is in the imperfect in the Hebrew which means habitually. It's repeated. It doesn't cease. It goes on and on. They are habitually cursing their parents. It's active voice. The kids themselves are doing it.

In Israel, if you cursed your father and mother under the Jewish system of the Mosaic Law, that was a capital crime. Do you realize that? For you to sound off to your parents, and to tell them where to head in, and to curse them was the death penalty brought down upon your own head (Exodus 21:17, Proverbs 20:11). When a parent had an incorrigible son who would not subject himself after warnings to their authority, that son was brought by the parents to the elders of Israel--the judges. Deuteronomy 21:18-22 tell us they executed the teenager. There is no doubt in the Old Testament that when a youngster rebels against the authority of his parents, maximum punishment is to be applied, and he is to be stopped--and the sooner the better.

Furthermore, it says, "He does not bless," it says, "his mother." The Hebrew word is "barath." This also is "piel" which is intensive. It means to hold in great honor. He just does not hold in any honor his parents. Furthermore, it's imperfect. He virtually holds his mother in contempt. Now, mothers are soft-hearted. They're easy prey for the contemptuous mass of children. You can really pound it to your mother, but when you try that with your father, the pounding may go the other way.

This is what the Bible is talking about. It spells it out. You might curse your father and tell the old man where to go, and you might take your old lady and you treat her in the same attitude as that series expresses, and you do not honor or bless her. Those are clear signs of rejection of parental authority. Again, it is active voice. The child is doing it himself. How do you honor your parents as a child? You honor by obeying them. When you have come to maturity, when you have passed age 20, you start taking over the responsibility of your life. Up to age 20, your parents tell you what to do. Then you respect them by their counsel. But you are responsible for your decision. Up to then, they are your priests; they are your guides; they are responsible for you; and, you are responsible to be subject and obedient and responsive to them. This is part of the chain of command.

It's just like a girl who is going to get married. Up to the moment that she says, "I do," she is under the authority of her father. The moment she says, "I do," she switches her authority to her husband. From then on, she does everything the husband tells her to do, even if it's the opposite of what her father tells her to do. Up to then, she does what her father tells her to do, even if it's opposite from what her fiancé tells her to do. The lines of authority in the Bible are very clear. Certainly between parents and children, there's no doubt. Rebellion against the authority of parents is rebellion against God, and that's immoral.

**The Second Generation**

Then we come to the second generation. The second decadent generations is in Proverbs 30:12: "There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their selfishness." This generation now gets morally worse because they become self-righteous. They see themselves as pure, meaning self-righteous here, but the Bible says that they are filthy. They have now degenerated morally. Their rejection of parental authority rears a second generation (the grandchildren) which reject the authority of God, and so they become their own authority. They are self-righteous. They see this as freedom. They rationalize and justify their human viewpoint goals; their conduct; and, their values. They dignify what is evil. It is a subjective generation. It centers all of its life, and judges everything, from its own frame of reference rather than from the frame of reference that comes from the Word of God.

God says that this kind of a superior generation is unwashed and covered with the filth of sin. It does not say that these children are not educated; that they are not cultured; that they are not wealthy; that they may not stand in esteem in the community; or, that they may not exercise positions of power. It says that the old sin nature in this generation is totally divorced from Bible doctrine--from the spiritual authority of God. So they become self-righteous. There are a bunch of spiritual anarchists. They have made their own basis of evaluating what they are. And God says that they cannot see themselves for the filthy creatures that they have now become. These are the grandchildren. Even a Christian can become smart and self-righteous. He can become so totally carnal that he can reflect this too. The carnal Christian rejects spiritual authority, and, therefore, he sees no need to even confess sin.

This is step two in the extermination of a family line controlled by the old sin nature and subjective toward doctrine--what they think about it and what they feel about it, rather than what the Word says. They are dominated by their emotions. These people lack positional and experiential sanctification.

**The Third Generation**

However, they have children. So along comes the great-grandchildren. Here is the third decadent generation. Verse 13 says, "There is a generation, O how lofty are their eyes, and their eyelids are lifted up." These children now have gone from the self-righteous; old sin nature-controlled; subjective; and, emotionally dominated parents to a third generation that has now stepped down from self-righteousness to pride and arrogance. That's what it means when it says, "Their eyes are lifted up." It is your eyes that will reflect arrogance more than anything else. Thus, the words, "lofty eyes, and their eyelids are lifted up."

This arrogance expresses itself in a deep lust for praise and for recognition. They want to be praised. They want to be recognized. It concentrates on pleasing itself first; then, it concerns itself for others. It never cares about pleasing God. Arrogance and pride control the great-grandchildren. This is the type of people who will try to impress you with their intelligence; with the status symbols they possess; and, with their wealth. They are just desirous of praise. The lust for praise always leads to the lust for power. They have no hesitation to coerce others. And if this third generation ever gets into positions of governmental power, boy, you better look out. If a generation has descended from disoriented people, and it has come to the third generation, Proverbs says that they're going to have such a lust for power that you won't believe it. They will be so arrogant, and they will be so determined to impose their will upon others. The third stage is destined to result in the fall or the destruction of the family line in the fourth generation. Proverbs 16:18 reminds us again of this.

So here we have the great grandchildren: proud and arrogant; a deep lust for praise; an obsession for recognition; and, extreme selfishness.

**The Fourth Generation**

Now we come to the fourth generation. This is the great-great-grandchildren. We read of these in verse 14: "There is a generation whose teeth are like swords, and their jaw teeth like knives to devour the poor from off the earth, and the needy from among men." The fourth generation has descended from parents who have become ruthless beasts of covetousness in their pride and arrogance. These children, therefore, reflect that quality in a voraciousness to devour the possessions of others--the poor and the helpless. So their teeth are described like swords and knives. This generation has maximum satanic power; wealth; prestige; and, controls. This generation is cruel in its words and in its deeds. It has well-developed levels of power and pride lust. It is a ruthless group. It is Satan's finest production against the defenseless. Communism is an expression of this kind of ruthlessness--the technique of taking from the helpless in order to support an elite few.

The fourth generation is the end of the line of hating God and worshiping false gods. For the Bible tells us that this generation then comes to destruction, and the line is brought to an end.

However, Exodus 20:6 gives us the other side of the picture. The other side of the picture is parents who love God and who respond to the Word of God: "And showing mercy to thousands of them that love Me and keep My commandments." These children who follow the positive volition response of their parents come to a different destiny. When your parents are positive to the Word of God, you follow the Word of God. When parents respond to God's grace, your family life is secure. Any generation may bring a negative volition curse to an end. We shall look at that more next time.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1973

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