



CrossRoads Notes:

Title: Petitions for the Next Generation

Theme: Praying With Authority for Our Children

Series: Girding up the Local Church

Introduction: *There is a battle for the minds, hearts and souls of our kids. Anyone who enters this battle seriously spends many hours thinking up ways to have the greatest influence possible on their children and grandchildren.*

Proposition: *I would propose to you that prayer for our next generation is needed more today than ever before as we live in the last days of the return of Jesus Christ. The Bible says, "The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds." (2 Corinthians 10:4)*

Interrogative Sentence: *Just how can we pray with true authority for our children and grandchildren? The church is always exhorting the Body of Christ to pray, but too often the leadership of the church fails to equip the people of God for the most powerful ministry in the world. That is a ministry led of the sword of the Spirit that will have the greatest influence regarding the eternal future of children, the ministry of prayer.*

The ministry of prayer could enable parents, grandparents and the true church to rejoice as the apostle John did when he wrote 2 John 1:1-4, "The elder. To the chosen lady and her children, whom I love in the truth--and not I only, but also all who know the truth--because of the truth, which lives in us and will be with us forever: Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Father's Son, will be with us in truth and love. It has given me great joy..." catch that, great joy, "...to find some of your children walking in the truth, just as the Father commanded us." (2 John 1:1-4)

It is my conviction that this passage of Scripture has a dual application covering individuals and the whole Body of Christ who love the truth and serve the Lord in sacrificial love. Those to whom it is written were ordinary people, such as any church is made up of ordinary people today and generations to come. Therefore, there is great assurance in this passage of Scripture for all Christians who will show true love by sacrificing time and energy to pray according to Biblical truth for their children and grandchildren, because we will see some of them living according to God's Word.

Transitional Sentence: *Petitions for the next generation begin with faith that God loves us and He will take care of us. We must enter His presence with praise. (Psalm 100:3-5)*

Transitional Sentence: *After you have enjoyed the Holy Spirit's bringing to remembrance of all the Lord has done for your children you can then pray for Holy Spirit revelation for them.* (Ephesians 3:16-19)

The most important prayer that you can pray for your children and grandchildren is that God would send His Holy Spirit into their spiritual hearts to reveal Christ. That they be truly born again and live in the fullness and the abundant life promised in Christ. Christian parents and grandparents can pray as the Apostle Paul prayed, that Jesus Christ would be made so real in the lives of their children and grandchildren and His love for them made so real that Christ would be allowed to be Savior and Lord, not treated as a tolerated authority in their lives. We can ask God to make it known to our children and grandchildren what it really means to have Christ dwell in their hearts.

The word "dwell" (*katoikeo*) here means to allow Christ to take up full residence by His Spirit in their spiritual hearts so that He might have full control over their lives. So Jesus Christ might use them fully as He wishes for His Father's purposes. The application is that our children and grandchildren will truly be full of the Holy Ghost responding joyfully to His promptings as He makes God's Word so real to them.

Transitional Sentence: *The church that is girded up for the future has offspring with Divine revelation of Christ and they are hungry to live according to God's good purposes.* (Philippians 2:12-13)

Pray that our children and grandchildren will have hearts to obey the Lord and be involved in the things of God even when they are not in our presence. Pray also that they will walk in a true fear of the Lord and that they will have hearts that will ask the Lord to do His work in their lives. Pray that God would bring them to a condition in their spiritual heart that says, "Make me hungry to do your will."

The church needs Christians who understand that it is God who is at work in them and only He can enable them to want and do His will. The word "works" (*energeo*) means that the Lord is the one who energizes us to have the desire to seek His will and He provides enablement for Christians to do the Lord's will. Our children must be partners with God in the work of the gospel of Christ.

Transitional Sentence: *The church that is girded up has Christians who are partners with the Lord and she is a Body of Christ that lives in confidence before the Lord and the world.* (2 Timothy 3:14-15)

Pray that our children and grand-children will become convinced that what they have learned is true because they have seen the lives of those they have learned it from. The Christian life they have been exposed to will produce fruit that is pleasing to God. They will be made wise and live a life that expresses the salvation of Christ within them.

Transitional Sentence: *The church that is girded up has Christians who are convinced of Biblical truth and are made wise in the living out their faith in Christ. She also has Christians who have a powerful thirst and hunger for the Word of God. (Psalm 119:1)*

Christians can literally ask the Lord to give their offspring a hunger and thirst for the Word of God and that they will seek Him with all their mind, heart and strength. That they will seek to learn the Word of God and will desire in their hearts to obey and live what the Bible tells them to do. Jesus said, "...It is written: `Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.' " (Matthew 4:4)

Transitional Sentence: *The church that is girded up has Christians who are joyfully into the Word of God and she has Christians who hate evil. (Psalm 97:10)*

Christians can ask the Lord to fill their children and grand-children with the Holy Spirit so they will not find delight in any kind of evil. The word "hate" (*sane*) can mean to be unwilling to be exposed to or apart of something. They will have the heart of the Psalmist who wrote - (Psalm 139:23-24)

Transitional Sentence: *The church that is girded up has Christians who find no delight in that which would break the heart of God and she has Christians who trust in the Lord to help them get victory in their anger. (Ephesians 4:26)* Pray and ask the Lord to enable our children and grand-children not to sin when they become angry and they will surrender everything over to the Lord, literally letting Him fight all battles they face.

Transitional Sentence: *The church that is girded up has Christians who let the Lord fight their battles and she has Christians that express Holy Spirit fruit. (Galatians 5:22-23)* It is imperative that our children and grandchildren will feed their spiritual hearts the Word of God and be led of the Holy Spirit so they may produce the fruit that should be seen in a Christian's life.

Transitional Sentence: *The church that is girded up has Christians that produce the fruit of the Holy Spirit and she has children and grandchildren who walk in a life of obedience. (Colossians 3:20) (Proverbs 1:8-9)* Pray that our children and grand-children will obey their parents in the Lord and they will be eager to get direction from their godly parents so that it will go well for them and their children.

Transitional Sentence: *The church that is girded up has obedient children and she has Christians who do not despise the Lord's discipline. (Proverbs 3:11-12)(Proverbs 23:13)* Pray that our children and grandchildren will accept the Lord's disciplines and they will not be blind to His correction. That we as Christian parents will have the courage to apply disciplines that are guided by the Lord and will cause our children to look to Jesus Christ for help to overcome all sin that longs to destroy their relationship with Him.

Transitional Sentence: *The church that is properly girded up has children and grandchildren who do not despise the Lord's disciplines and she needs parents and grandparents who live in a way that encourages their offspring to trust in Christ.* (Matthew 5:15-16) **Pray That:** We as parents and grandparents may live in such a way that causes our children and grandchildren to praise God for the work He has done in our lives. That our lives would give our children and grand-children a hope that inspires them to look to and put their trust in Jesus Christ as they face the temptations of the flesh and the world and combat the lies of the devil.

Transitional Sentence: *The church that is girded up has parents who live out their Christian beliefs and she needs children and grandchildren who have Christian friends who will build them in the Lord.* (Ecclesiastes 4:10) **Pray That:** The Lord would raise up good solid Christian friends that will build and challenge our children and grand-children in the Lord Jesus Christ and that they will mature in the Lord so they can be true Godly friends to their friends."

Transitional Sentence: *The church that is girded up has children and grandchildren who have Christian friends and she needs Christians who are not influenced by people who have ungodly character.* (Proverbs 1:10) (1 Corinthians 15:33) **Pray That:** The Lord would send the Holy Spirit to remind our children and grand-children of these two passages of Scripture so they can be successful in living for Christ. Our children and grand-children will not be influenced by anyone who could cause them to fall into sin and hurt the Lord.

Transitional Sentence: *The church that is girded up has Christian offspring who avoid the influence of bad company and she has Christians who have Biblical convictions.* (Matthew 24:12-13) The Apostle Paul gave this exhortation, (1 Corinthians 16:13) **Pray That:** Our children and grand-children will be able to stand firm in their Biblical convictions so they will be able to live forever with Christ and be true salt and light in a sin cursed world.

Transitional Sentence: *The church that is girded up has Christians with Biblical convictions and she has Christians who put proper stewardship on their Holy Spirit given gifts so as to be a blessing to others.* (Philippians 2:4) According to the Apostle Paul the church that is girded up has Christians who exercise their Spiritual gifts out of sacrificial love. (1 Corinthians 12-14) **Pray That:** Our children and grand-children will exercise their Spiritual gifts for the good of others, not only for their own good and they would do nothing out of selfish ambition and consider others better than themselves.

Transitional Sentence: *Christians who gird up the local church exercise their Spiritual gifts out of sacrificial love, their people avoid addictions and they know the dangers of abuse of alcohol and drugs.* (Proverbs 20:1) **Pray That:** Our children and grand-children will fear the dangers that can come with partaking in alcohol and drugs and other addictions that would cause them to find pleasure and delight in anything but accomplishing God's will for them.

Transitional Sentence: *The church that is girded up has Christians who avoid possible addiction that could put their relationship with Christ in danger and she has Christians with marriages that honor God.* (Colossians 3:19) (Ephesians 5:25) The Holy Spirit inspired writers of the New Testament say a lot about how husbands act in their marriages because it affects the effectiveness of their prayers for the church and family. (1 Peter 3:7) Christian wives are told to (Colossians 3:18) **Pray That:** Our children and grand-children will have spouses that were raised in true Christian homes and they will bring great joy to each other. They will have marriages that bring glory and honor to the Lord.

Transitional Sentence: *Healthy Christian marriages gird up the Lord's church and so do children who consider the Lord's ways over their own way of thinking.* (Proverbs 3:5-6) **Pray That:** Our children and grandchildren will overcome the world's view on living and have an understanding of what it really means to trust in the Lord. That they will acknowledge Him as they live down here on this earth so they can enjoy the path of life that He has chosen for them and they will be able to discern what doors He has opened for them.

Transitional Sentence: *The Church that is girded up has Christians who have a Christ disciplined life that lives according to God's direction and she has Christians who prove faithful.* (1 Corinthians 4:2) (1 Corinthians 4:5) **Pray That:** Our children and grand-children will prove faithful to everything the Lord has entrusted to them.

In Closing: *The church that is girded up for the Lord's work has God's vision for their children and grandchildren.* It is much greater than counting numbers in the youth group, having fun and games, sending out pictures of group hugs. The Holy Spirit of Christ call is for conversions of spiritual hearts. Conversion is the great work of God where repentant sinners pledge loving loyalty and undivided allegiance to the Christ who died for their sins. The church that has girded up their children by prayer has children who are used mightily by God.

More than anyone else Christian parents can have the most influence on their children, because when Christ died upon the Cross the veil was ripped open so they could enter into the presence of God who sits on the Throne of Grace. The call to pray is from God's Word and we are given a sure promise, "The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective." (James 5:16b)