

## Ministry of Grandparents

As leader of your class, you have now arrived at the last session that brings out the ministries of family leaders. It is appropriate that this course takes time to lift the value of grandparents. We live in a culture with a heavy emphasis on the immediate. Yesterday's news is already past history. What is going on today is being discovered and may soon be discarded as of little value. In such a society grandparents may be seen as already have had their turn. People can see them as those who are past their prime. Haven't they climbed the mountain and are now descending on the other side? Many have retired or soon will.

The first question this brings up is how do grandparents see themselves. Have they bought into the possibility they no longer count for much? Not hearing often of their value, have they positioned themselves as having been put out to pasture so to speak? When they realize their grandchildren are not calling them, does that mean they are free to retire from being family leaders?

As this class session comes together, it is your job as leader to make sure that the challenge of being a grandparent is held up high? We want to make sure grandparents do not get turned off by not being noticed, not being regarded. The reality is grandparents, if they value the years that have matured them, the lessons they have learned, the wisdom they have gained, the faith that has sustained them, all this makes them immensely valuable.

It is sad the church has often overlooked the importance of the impact grandparents can make in their families which also translates to how the children of the congregation are being raised. Grandparents are the great antidote to short term thinking. They are in the best position to help all those who follow them into reckoning what life is all about. We are all going to grow old. We are all going to die. We are all going to be faced with what is really important in the one life we have to live.

How crucial is it for a grandparent to share themselves with their families, especially their grandchildren? They usually have more time to pray, to play, to share, to engage in meaningful ways. Do they have hope in life with God after death, do they have faith that gets them up in the morning? Do they take the time to initiate communications with their grandchildren? Do they pray for them? Have they embraced their calling of passing on the faith, of praying for each grandchild each day? Have they studied the Proverbs and realized the unbelievable value of wisdom? Have they probed into the world their grandchildren are living in? Are they completely out of touch and content to stay that way?

All of this to say this class session gives your class the opportunity to wake up and claim the extraordinary importance grandparents can be for their families. Somebody or some things are going to have a great influence on those growing up in the family. It is time for grandparents to make sure they enter the fray and have the influence they are capable of having on each grandchild. That will usually mean they have to take the initiative to communicate, to share experiences, to stick with those who are having troubles and with those who are doing well. We never want to underestimate what our grandkids are perceiving in us. Are we persevering with them, showing up at games, recitals,



## Adults Saving Kids

graduations? Have we put other matters aside to give our relationship with them a major priority? Do they see we really care, that their lives really count? Is our faith directing our lives so that they see how important Jesus is to us? Do our stories reflect for them what Christian living is all about? Do our grandkids see how we have dealt with setbacks and loss? Have we lifted up the cross to them as what makes one's life solid and hopeful?

As grandparents we are accountable for how we talk, for what we do, for how we regard others? Our opinions count and how we are with those who differ from us speaks volumes.

As leader do not let grandparents in the group or those who soon will be grandparents to minimize the calling they have from God. Help the discussion to take on a long range view shoring up in different ways the challenge of being the best grandparent one can be.