

Learn How to Break Generational Curses

It takes time and intentionality, but with God's help, you can change the legacy you give your children. Here are some suggestions to help you fight the battle against generational sin—and win.

- **Identify your family's sin patterns.** Were backbiting, criticism and arguments prevalent in your home? Poor self-esteem? Alcohol or other substance abuse? Prayerfully consider whether you exhibit any negative traits that you observed growing up. But keep this in mind: Generational sins stay hidden through self-deception. We've become so accustomed to a certain type of environment that we don't realize it's not right. If you are brave enough, ask your wife or kids or family friends this question: How am I like my dad?
- **Involve others in your efforts to change.** Don't assume you can go it alone. Join a Christian accountability group. Ask your wife or husband to help you—she probably knows you better than you know yourself. Also ask your children in an age-appropriate way to show you how you could improve as a parent.
- **Recognize that it takes hard work, patience, and sacrifice to break an addiction or pattern of sin.** I dealt with this issue in my most recent novel, *By Reason of Insanity*, and tried to demonstrate how hard it can be to break the cycle of abuse. In real life, breaking sin's strongholds is a day-to-day grind, a sometimes-mundane effort with a lot riding on the outcome. Somebody has to break these generational chains. Will it be you?
- **Forgive your father for his shortcomings and any wounds he has given you.** Until you grant your own father unconditional forgiveness, it will be almost impossible to break free from

that pattern of sin.

- **Confess your sins and accept forgiveness for them.** Beating yourself up for the ways you've failed God and your family only discourages you and weakens your resolve to change. Trust in God's grace and gratefully accept His love and forgiveness.
- **Proactively sow and seek blessings in your family's life.** Do things with your children that your parents didn't do with you. Spend lots of quality time together so you build great shared memories. Listen to them. Ask their forgiveness when needed. Laugh together. Pray together.
- **God's Blessings to Thousands of Generations.** The other side to this is that if you do break those sin patterns, God promises to bless your family for generations to come. When my son Joshua was 17, he and I attended a father-son camp that included a high ropes course, whitewater rafting, and other exhilarating activities. Josh was in his prime physically, and I ... well ... I was 40-something.

The camp experience gave us an opportunity to swap roles. Josh became the strong leader, and I observed and learned from him in the hard physical challenges we underwent together. The highlight for me was when Josh told me in a group setting how much he loved me—and I told him how proud I was of his bold faith in God. It was a very special moment that reinforced to me how richly God blesses those who love Him. In that moment, I felt the impact of my godly father on succeeding generations.

God wants to bless your family abundantly, to the thousandth generation. Let Psalm 112:1-2 encourage and motivate you: "How joyful are those who fear the Lord and delight in obeying his commands. Their children will be successful everywhere; an entire generation of godly people will be blessed" (NLT).

Now *that's* a gift worth giving!

Randy Singer is the author of six Christian novels and a veteran trial attorney. He also serves as a teaching pastor for Trinity Church in Virginia Beach, Virginia. Check out his website at .