

Generational Discipline

" Man is still responsible. He must turn the alloy of modern experience into the steel of mastery and character. His success lies not with the stars, but with himself. He must carry on the fight of self-correction and discipline."
-Frank Curtis Williams

In today's fast-paced world of technology, stress, and ever-changing business, people are in such a hurry to get somewhere that they forget what they are leaving behind. If you stop and think about it, every word, every action, and everything we do throughout the day leaves an impression on the people around us. Whether it's our co-workers, family, or friends that we interact with, our commitment to personal discipline is the foundation of our perceived character.

Although we might not realize it, each day we leave an indelible impression of our personal self-worth, beliefs, work ethic, and character with every person we come in contact with. Over a period of days, weeks, and years these little impressions begin to build a picture or "advertisement" of our character for others to see. It is human nature to make mistakes, but it is also human nature to overlook the legacy of daily impressions we leave behind.

Generational discipline is the legacy that each of us leaves behind for our friends, spouses, and children to remember us by. It is also the legacy of our work ethic that our co-workers, employers, and customers remember us by. Every day that we show up to work, interact, and perform a task, we are building our own "advertisement" for others to see. Small things that we do might not seem like a big deal at the time, but over the course of our careers they amount to nothing less than our character image. Words like teamplayer, selflessness, commitment, and integrity are used to describe a person that focuses on his or her daily performance.

Around 40 years ago, Yale University conducted an extensive seven-year study on how a person's actions in life effects the lives of his or her children. This study was focused around the lives of two men: Max Jukes and Jonathan Edwards. Max Jukes was an Atheist that believed in the abolition of laws and rules. Mr. Jukes formed an organization called the Freedom Movement that preached free sex, no laws, no formal education and no responsibilities. Jonathan Edwards was known by all as the "disciplinarian". Not because he disciplined his children harshly, but because he was a self-disciplined man. He became a preacher that believed in leading by example. He authored two books on the subjects of physical fitness and kindness. Mr. Edwards later became involved in teaching people to be responsible for their daily actions. Both of these men were chosen for their diverse beliefs, but also because they both fathered 13 children. Here are the legacies they left behind:

MAX JUKES

1026 descendants
300 convicts
27 murderers
190 prostitutes
509 alcoholics & drug addicts

JONATHON EDWARDS

929 descendants
430 ministers
314 war veterans
75 authors
86 college professors
13 university presidents
7 congressmen
3 governors
1 Vice-President of the United States

Throughout my travels as a professional speaker, I am constantly asked the question of "what effect does self-discipline have on my life?" Sure, becoming disciplined will change your life for the better, but real results are seen in the legacy we leave behind. When we begin to use self-discipline to control our emotional highs and lows, our appearance, our work ethic, and our commitment to physical exercise, we are doing much more than improving our own lives. Our ability to begin focusing on our daily performance is directly proportional to the success our generations will experience. Today is not about you, your job, your bank account, or even your own personal satisfaction. Today is about the legacy you leave behind.

Take the time to slow down and examine every aspect of your actions, words, and thoughts throughout the day. Make it a priority to exhibit the trait of self-discipline. Begin focusing on the "advertisement" that you are showing your co-workers, friends, and family. The ability to control your life through the power of self-discipline, is not only the secret to a lifetime of success, but the determining factor of the legacy you leave behind. The legacy of self-discipline.

A True Tale of Two Families

Consider the following true case studies that was done to contrast two families: **the Jukes family and the Edwards family.**

Max Jukes lived in New York. He did not believe in Christ and did not give any Christian training to his children. He refused to take his children to church, even when they asked to go. Over the course of a couple hundred years and several generations, Max Jukes produced 1,026 descendants. 300 of them were sent to prison for an average term of 13 years. 190 of them became public prostitutes. 680 of them were alcoholics. His family, thus far, has cost the state of New York well over a half million dollars. None of his descendants have made any positive contribution to society.

In contrast, consider Jonathan Edwards. He lived in the same state of New York, at the same time as Max Jukes. But he loved the Lord and served the Lord to the best of his ability. He made sure his children were in church every Sunday. Over the past couple hundred years, Jonathan Edwards has had 929 descendants. Of these, 430 became pastors. 86 became university professors. 13 became university presidents. 75 of them authored good books. Five of them were elected to the United States Congress, and two were elected to the Senate. One became Vice President of the United States.

The Edwards family never cost the state of New York one cent, but instead, has made many tremendous positive contributions to society.

1. **EXO 20:2** I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. 3 **Thou shalt have no other gods before me.** 4 Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: 5 Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for **I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the INIQUITY (avon) of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me;** 6 **And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.** (KJV)
2. **DEU 11:26** See, **I am setting before you today a BLESSING and a CURSE—** 27 **the BLESSING if you obey the commands of the LORD your God** that I am giving you today; 28 **the CURSE if you disobey** the commands of the LORD your God and turn from the way that I command you today **by following other gods, which you have not known.** 29 When the LORD your God has brought you into the land you are entering to possess, **you are to proclaim on Mount Gerizim the BLESSINGS, and on Mount Ebal the CURSES.**
3. **PRO 3:33** **The LORD's CURSE is on the house of the wicked, but he BLESSES the home of the righteous.**