

When Folks In Your Family Tree Are A Little Crooked

Message Magazine's Online Devotional for Wednesday, May 18, 2016

Today's Scripture Focus: [Nehemiah 9:34-38](#)

We are focusing on sin recovery principle number four of 12: "We are submitting to an honest self-inventory as the Holy Spirit makes us more aware." 

I know from experience what it's like to suffer internal struggles due to heredity. Every person who was born of a woman, whether you know her or not, has to face the reality of your ancestors. This reality is that they struggled with pride, rage, hatred, pessimism, over-ambitiousness, promiscuity, alcoholism, drug abuse, greed, envy, doubt, etc. The sooner you admit that to yourself, and that this accounts for half of your struggles, the other half being habits you have cultivated yourself, is the sooner you will be in a position to experience victory.

If your dad was an angry man, acknowledge that his anger may have had a negative impact on you. If your mother was a crack addict, acknowledge that her addiction had some negative impact on you. If your grandmother was a woman of the night and could not see a handsome man go by without soliciting him, acknowledge that this may have had some negative impact on your life. If your grandfather abandoned his family, accept the fact that this had a negative impact on your life. I say all this not to give you a way to make excuses for maladaptive or sinful behaviors. I say this so you can take an honest self-inventory and perhaps identify some of what makes you tick. Yes, there are great qualities we also inherit from our foreparents, but obviously, we do not need to overcome those.

What do you do once you recognize the impact of your ancestors on your life? Do you wallow in it? Do you blame someone else for your poor choices? Do you throw up your hands in despair because you feel like you got the short end of the stick in this thing called life? Let me share an idea with you. You should talk to God about it. Ask God to show you what negative impact the decisions and habits of your foreparents are still affecting your lifestyle choices today. Ask him to nullify the effects of heredity to the extent that it drives you to do evil. Ask God to manifest His love in your life some much that you learn to make right choices as a matter of consistent habit so you can bring Him glory. Ask God to adopt you into His family and give you a fresh, godly bloodline through Christ. Ask God how to be of service to the next generation.