Breaking the Cycle of generational sin

The righteous lead blameless lives; blessed are their children after them. (Proverbs 20:7 NIV)
HAVE YOU EVER FANTASIZED ABOUT RECEIVING AN INHERITANCE?

We typically think of receiving an inheritance as acquiring something of material worth.

**In-her-it-ance:** something acquired by a family member or rightful heir at birth such as personal characteristics, position, and/or possessions. It is anything that has been transmitted from the past or handed down, descended, or may descend by legal right or relational association. It is reserved for a particular person by means of outcomes of an action or way of life. (Adapted from the World English Dictionary Definition)

Did you know that there is also such a thing as a spiritual inheritance?

Spiritual inheritance can bring about **blessing** from generation to generation. Blessings promised to those in our past who have loved God and served faithfully extend through our family line.

However, consequences of **punishment** come down the bloodline as well.

**TRUTH:** Family sins, sexual sins, and occult practices continue to enter subsequent generations **unless properly addressed.**
You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments. (Exodus 20:5-6 NIV)

If you fully obey the Lord your God and carefully follow all his commands I give you today, the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations on earth. All these blessings will come on you and accompany you if you obey the Lord your God... The fruit of your womb will be blessed, and the crops of your land and the young of your livestock—the calves of your herds and the lambs of your flocks. (Deuteronomy 28:1,2,4 NIV)

However, if you do not obey the Lord your God and do not carefully follow all his commands and decrees I am giving you today, all these curses will come on you and overtake you... The fruit of your womb will be cursed, and the crops of your land, and the calves of your herds and the lambs of your flocks. (Deuteronomy 28:15,18 NIV)
Funny - it doesn’t feel unfair to inherit blessing, but inheriting punishment seems completely unjust. Isn’t God supposed to be a God of love? Here’s the truth: God is fair, but life is not fair because the world is full of sin.

Each of us has a free will and each of us can choose to obey God’s law and be blessed or disobey God’s law and be cursed. The choices we make affect everyone around us. We set things into motion that will have a ripple effect for generations to come.

We should question why we seem to repeat the same patterns of family fear and failings, even though we try to change.

But from everlasting to everlasting the Lord’s love is with those who fear Him, and His righteousness with their children’s children— with those who keep His covenant and remember to obey His precepts. (Psalm 103:17-18 NIV)
HOW CONSEQUENCES PASS DOWN THROUGH GENERATIONAL LINES

Here are some common origins of generational harm:

**Sin:** When we choose to sin we come out from under God’s protective covering and enter into Satan’s territory. This hurts us and everyone around us. Children may perceive a parent’s sin as normal and continue the cycle in their own lives and with their own children.

**Spoken words:** Curses are placed on individuals through words of hatred, death and continual criticism. This begins a cycle of parents speaking to their children the way they were spoken to by their parents.

**Occult Practices:** When we expose ourselves and our children to astrology, palm reading, séances and any other practices of gaining spiritual guidance through sources other than God, we begin a spiritual heritage of harm.
NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF GENERATIONAL INFLUENCES

We inherit generational tendencies in every area of life:

- **Physical**: genetic defects and family illnesses, eating disorders
- **Emotional**: inappropriate emotional reactions, depression, suicidal tendencies
- **Mental**: intellectual disabilities, mental illness
- **Spiritual**: propensity to sin, rebel, become addicted
SO WHERE IS THE HOPE?

The sinless Lord Jesus, through His death and resurrection, has redeemed us and will restore to us all that the enemy has taken and defiled.

The place where we find cleansing and release is always at the cross.

We deal with generational sin the same way we deal with personal sin.

As believers in Jesus, we have the responsibility of breaking unresolved generational bondages AND the amazing privilege of continuing a flow of blessing to our children and their children.
**STEPS TO BREAKING THE CYCLE OF GENERATIONAL SIN**

*Step 1:*

Thank Jesus for dying on the cross so your family can be free.

Each one of us, of our own free will, chooses either to acknowledge our need of a personal Savior or to deny our need and rely on our own strength. While we cannot pray for someone else to receive Christ, we can thank Jesus for making Himself as available to our family members as He is to us.

**A prayer of gratitude**

Jesus, I know that my family and I are powerless to overcome our past sins on our own. Thank You for dying on the cross and paying the penalty that we owe. You have overcome every evil by rising from the dead. Even if no one else in my family understands the sacrifice You’ve made for them, I receive Your gift of new life.

Thank You for loving my family. I place them in Your hands.
Step 2:

Forgive your ancestors for the sins they’ve committed.

You may be unsure of who sinned and how they sinned, but you know that you are reaping the consequences because of the patterns you see within your family. The Lord understands this and He knows the specifics. You can pray a general prayer. The importance of this step is in expressing a heart of humility and obedience before the Lord and asking for release.

A prayer of forgiveness

Lord, I forgive ______ (name the person if you can) ___ for___ (name the offenses specifically if you know what they are) ___.

I forgive him/her because You have forgiven me.
**Step 3:**

**Renounce any ties to the occult.**

It may be that you have participated in spiritual activities without being aware of their potential harm. By trusting in horoscopes, seeing yourself as described by your zodiac sign, having your palm read, consulting a psychic, undergoing hypnosis, contacting the dead and/or having your fortune told you are participating in the occult. We recommend that you remove the following items from your home: tarot cards, Ouija (wiji) boards, eight balls and astrological signs.

**Here is a good rule of thumb: it is dangerous to consult and seek guidance from any spirit other than the Father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit.**

Again- you may not know specifics about family members who have participated in occultism, but you can renounce any and all ties to their activities. The Lord knows what has come down through your family lines.

**A prayer of renouncing:**

As a child of God I claim that the power of the blood of Jesus is setting me and my children free from the consequences of all occult activity from my father’s and my mother’s family lines. I renounce all attachments to ____ (name the activities specifically if you can) ____. I look to You and You alone for guidance on how to live my life. I love You Lord. for harm to come …).
Step 4:

Place the cross of Jesus between yourself and your family members.

By taking this step in prayer, you are cancelling the effects of your ancestor’s sinful decisions. If your family members are still living, you continue to honor them and love them, but you look to them only through the cross.

A prayer of release:

I declare the blood of Jesus to stand between me and past generations as a wall of separation. I cancel every assignment of darkness and remove every right of the demonic to afflict me. I ask You to remove the effects of ___(addiction, adultery, chronic unemployment, disease…)___ I thank You Lord for releasing me and my children from the burden of carrying the consequences of these offenses.
Step 5:

Call out for the blessings the Lord has always intended for your family.

Remember that the Bible says that the Lord shows love for a thousand generations. There are blessings intended for you that have been blocked by sin. If you have prayed the prayers above, you have opened the doors of heaven and those blessings can be accessed. Boldly ask the Lord to give you what He has always desired to give you.

A prayer for blessing:

Lord, I believe Your Word that says my children and I are blessed to a thousand generations by the righteousness of my ancestors. I thank you for removing the effects of their sin from us and I ask that You pour out blessings upon us now. We receive every good and perfect gift You have for us with hearts of gratitude and love.
SOME HELPFUL SUGGESTIONS

Here are some things that can help if you feel stuck:

• **Pray out loud.** Our convictions somehow feel more real when we hear our own voice saying them. This may be difficult for you. Don’t feel foolish—press through. Say it out loud like you mean it.

• **Find someone you trust to pray with you.** It would be best to pray with someone who believes that Jesus paid the penalty for sin when He died on the cross. After you have prayed out loud, ask your friend to pray a blessing over you. You don’t always have to close your eyes when you pray. It may sink into your heart more if the person praying over you establishes eye contact with you.

• **Invite your friend to check up on you in the days ahead.** Give your friend permission to ask the sensitive questions that you may wish to avoid. By keeping your feelings in the light, the power of hiddenness and secrets is broken.

• Finally, if you do not have someone to agree with you in prayer over your situation, **contact us through our website** and we will get back with you. We care about your healing and want you to be free.

*Believe that with God’s help, you have been set free.*

Mark and Tammy
The importance of breaking generational sin is critical. Why not share this valuable resource with your family, a friend or even perhaps a neighbor?

For more free resources: handofjesus.org