

I was having a conversation with my 2nd and 3rd grade Sunday school class about how the reverence for God seems to be less evident than it used to be. I shared with them how when I was their age, and even a few years older, my parents would have to get their gas for the next work week on Saturday night, because the gas stations were closed on Sundays. As children, if we were going to make a candy run to the store, it would have to be on Saturday as well. Why? Sundays were set aside because so many people were in church, that it wasn't advantageous for the businesses to be open. My family was one that wasn't in church, but I was still aware of the day being special because it was God's day.

My thoughts move forward to just a few years ago, when we took the same age-group camping for the weekend. We brought these children to this camp each year for about four years. Every time, the same church folks would walk around the camp on Saturday, to invite all of the campers to join them for worship service the next morning. Our group and a handful of others, usually from the older generation, would be the only people to attend. What bothered me was the fact that as we worshipped under an open-air pavilion, parents were bringing their children up to the playground which was right next to our service, allowing them to run and play, squealing and yelling as we tried to hear God's word being spoken. "Couldn't they have them wait for just one half hour?" was all I could think. There was no reverence for what was taking place, from the children or their parents.

I have been a Christian now for about twenty-two years. My husband and I are 'of one mind' when it comes to our faith, and we raised our children using biblical principles. We also believe we 'lived' what we believed, and God was ever-present in our home, not just on Sundays, but every day of the week. Were we perfect? No, of course not. We did do our best, though, and believed and claimed Proverbs 22:6, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." (NKJV). We really thought that would be enough to insure their place as believers as teenagers, and then adults, allowing for moments of weakness in between. We are currently praying through the 'weakness in between' moments for two of our children, and it is a frightening place to be.

We have taken prayer and God out of the schools, elementary school through college. The only evidence the secular world sees of Christianity, is either a crazy sect of people who call themselves a 'Baptist' church that protests soldier's funerals, or the lunatics who 'hear voices' on television. God has become a punch-line, instead of our Almighty Creator. He is rejected as Creator in our children's science books as early as kindergarten, with the all-too-familiar, 'millions of years ago'. Sex and violence are commonplace in movies and television, music and video games. We are fighting a war of immorality and selfishness from every side, including inside our church buildings. We are seeing and hearing of people of faith who are stealing money from the church, or pastors and priests who have been caught molesting children.

God help us. And He is the only one who can. We are in the last days. I am convinced of this, as I look at the younger children I am trying to teach, and as I look at my own children who are in the middle of this frightening battle. I don't have an answer as to how we can help defend our faith and instill it in our children so they can withstand the enemies of this world. What I do know is we need to keep fighting, keep teaching, keep praying, keep setting genuine examples, and most of all, keep on believing in an Almighty God who has this situation securely in His majestic hands.