



Authenticity: Key to Passing the Torch

-by Rick Sinclair

Do you all remember Art Linkletter? A television and radio personality for over 60 years, Art authored several books including a #1 best-seller, "Kids Say The Darndest Things". During one of the regular segments on his daytime TV program, "House Party", Art would interview children on stage. In the process, the kids would typically share amusing and often embarrassing insights into family and community life. You see, Art had discovered something: kids 'say' whatever they 'see'. They look right past the window dressing adults put on everything, and they tell it like it is. They haven't yet learned to filter their observations through the lenses of propriety, etiquette, and social polish. If an emperor with no clothes parades down the street, leave it to a youngster to point out the nonsense while the adults in the crowd, politely turning their heads, consent to the charade.

So what's all this got to do with passing the torch? Whether you realize it or not, your kids are looking right past the 'Sunday morning you'. That's right. It doesn't matter how cheerfully you greet the Pastor, how joyfully you enter into praise, how deeply you are moved at the altar, or how polished your sermon is. What the kids really want to know is this: "What does Dad really think about this stuff? What does this Jesus-stuff have to do with real life?" And they get their answer on Monday morning (or maybe sooner if some blankety-blank cuts you off as you drive home with your little flock on Sunday afternoon). Insightful & inspiring sermons are delivered on Sunday morning, but the real values we impart to our children are communicated in the details of daily living.

Authenticity. If we're called to anything, we're called to be authentic, to live out our relationship with Christ '24-7', allowing the light of His Word to penetrate every aspect of our lives. Maybe that's why Deuteronomy 6.7 commands us to teach His words to our children and talk of them "when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up." It's not a 'Sunday-morning-go-to-meeting' thing; it's an everyday, every place, each and every moment lifestyle of true discipleship that we are called to live.

So if Art Linkletter knocks on my door, I hope I'll be willing to let him interview my kids. But I need to remember this: even if Art never knocks, Jesus will.