

SCRIPTURE READING: Ezekiel 16:44-52.

INTRODUCTION:

1. Ezekiel 16:44, "Behold, everyone who quotes proverbs will quote this proverb concerning you, saying, 'Like mother, like daughter.'"
2. We might say, "Like father, like son;" "It runs in the family;" "He's a chip off the old block;" or, "The nut doesn't fall far from the tree."
3. Without question, the influence of parents on children is profound. Ezekiel 16:45A.
4. However, these are proverbs. They are generally true. There are exceptions to the rule.



APPLICATIONS:

1. **Parents, be good influences.** Ephesians 6:4.

- A. **Instruct.** Deuteronomy 6:5-9.
- B. **Discipline.** Hebrews 12:3-11.
- C. **Model.** "Of the Lord." Jesus practiced what He preached. He showed people what He expected them to do. John 13:3-5, 12-17. Attend. Sing. Participate. Grow. 1 Corinthians 11:1.



2. **Parents, look in the mirror that is your children.**

- A. Since Elizabeth has been back home, on several occasions I've mistaken Elizabeth for Tammy.
- B. In many ways, children are a reflection of their parents. "Like daughter, like mother." Parents, chances are very good that if you don't like something about your children, you have the same fault.
- C. What's especially sad is that this truth is often clear to everyone but the parent.
- D. Our children are great windows into our own souls. We need to look at them and learn about ourselves.
- E. Children reflect technique as well as character. "But that's not the way I am!" But is the difference innate or just that we haven't molded our children as effectively as our parents molded us? Our children are as much a commentary on our nurture as our nature. Proverbs 22:6. Parents, please learn what your children are teaching you about the way you are bringing them up before it's too late to do anything about it.

3. **Children, look into the mirror that is your parents.**

- A. When I told my dad I was going to ask Tammy to marry me, he told me to look at her mother and ask myself if I could live with someone like her. Why? Because her mother was the best indicator of the type of wife Tammy was going to become.
- B. In many ways, parents are a reflection of their children, a glimpse of their future selves. The older you get, the more you realize this truth. It's reflected in statements like, "Oh no, I'm starting to sound just like my mother!" No, you are just starting to realize that you sound just like your mother. You've always sounded like her. You are just now starting to be old enough to remember what she was like when she was your age. You didn't know her before then, but you were just like her then too.
- C. Children, look into the mirror that is your parents and ...

- 1) **Learn about yourself.**
- 2) **Don't live in denial.** "I'm nothing like my mother!" Oh yes you are!
- 3) **Change for the better, not the worse.** Tammy and I tell our children to imitate what we've done right, reject what we've done wrong, and raise our grandchildren better than we raised them. Sadly, instead of accentuating the positive and eliminating the negative, many children accentuate the negative and eliminate the positive. Ezekiel 16:47.
- 4) **Be humble.** It's not easy to overcome the forces of nature and nurture. Wishing doesn't make it so. It takes lots and lots of hard work.
- 5) **Be patient with your parents.** "Cats In The Cradle."
- 6) **If someone says, "You are just like your mother/father" and it's not a compliment, listen very, very carefully and do something about it.**

CATS IN THE CRADLE

My child arrived just the other day
He came to the world in the usual way
But there were planes to catch and bills to pay
He learned to walk while I was away
And he was talkin' 'fore I knew it, and as he grew
He'd say "I'm gonna be like you dad
You know I'm gonna be like you"

And the cat's in the cradle and the silver spoon
Little boy blue and the man on the moon
When you comin' home dad?
I don't know when, but we'll get together then son
You know we'll have a good time then

My son turned ten just the other day
He said, "Thanks for the ball, Dad, come on let's play
Can you teach me to throw", I said "Not today
I got a lot to do", he said, "That's ok"
And he walked away but his smile never dimmed
And said, "I'm gonna be like him, yeah
You know I'm gonna be like him"

And the cat's in the cradle and the silver spoon
Little boy blue and the man on the moon
When you comin' home son?
I don't know when, but we'll get together then son
You know we'll have a good time then

Well, he came home from college just the other day
So much like a man I just had to say
"Son, I'm proud of you, can you sit for a while?"
He shook his head and said with a smile
"What I'd really like, Dad, is to borrow the car keys
See you later, can I have them please?"

And the cat's in the cradle and the silver spoon
Little boy blue and the man on the moon
When you comin' home son?
I don't know when, but we'll get together then son
You know we'll have a good time then

I've long since retired, my son's moved away
I called him up just the other day
I said, "I'd like to see you if you don't mind"
He said, "I'd love to, Dad, if I can find the time
You see my new job's a hassle and kids have the flu
But it's sure nice talking to you, Dad
It's been sure nice talking to you"

And as I hung up the phone it occurred to me
He'd grown up just like me
My boy was just like me

And the cat's in the cradle and the silver spoon
Little boy blue and the man on the moon
When you comin' home son?
I don't know when, but we'll get together then son
You know we'll have a good time then