

“Remember your creator in the days of your youth” Ecclesiastes chapter 12 verse 1

There could be no better resolution for a new year, whatever our age, than to search for and explore God. And the writer of the book of Ecclesiastes insists that it is a good idea to do it in our youth. There are many who have turned to faith in their later years who have looked back and wished they had done it sooner. Although they may live fruitful lives in their new found faith, they may sometimes consider all the youthful energy that they spent on other things, all the things they could have learned, all the ways they could have grown and all the troubles that they suffered to no purpose.

One of the most difficult things in the life of a believing parent is to watch their children making their way through life. We are rightly proud of their achievements and successes, and especially when they demonstrate good character, and we may see in them many indications that our stumbling attempts to teach them faith have born some fruit as they evidence some degree of belief. But as they grow towards adolescence and adulthood they come more and more under the influences of the world through their friends, the media, entertainment and secular education. Their values and standards become those of the world.

Then we see them living according to worldly values and measures of happiness, and we wonder what they will do when things go wrong. Then they may begin to struggle in areas of their lives, as the things they depended on to give the security, success and well-being fail them.

We help them if we can, of course, with emotional support and in practical ways, but we know that what they really need is for their lives to be under God's loving rule, care and guidance, and we pray that they will come to know him before long. Perhaps they even look at their parents faith and entertain a vain hope that it will be enough for them, too.

However godly parents might be, children cannot live towards God on the back of their faith. Relationship with God is a personal thing which must be new for every generation. Parents can teach their children about Jesus and how to be right with God, but unless children and young people engage with God for themselves they will not know the salvation, abundant life and eternal life that comes from believing in Jesus.

Prayer.

Father, thank you that your call to faith in Jesus may come at any age, and we bless you for those who have given their lives to you in old age. But we ask your blessing today on our children and young people, those who have grown up with believing parents and those who have had no Christian influence on their lives at all. We thank and bless you for those who have come to you in their youth and have a lifetime to know, love and serve you. Please move us to be persistent in prayer for those who have not. In Jesus' name, amen.

All these devotionals can be found on our website inghamitechurch.org on the 'Resources' page. Click on the link to go there.