

**PATTERNS**

**"He did evil in the sight of the Lord as his fathers had done, and did not desist from the sins which Jeroboam, son of Nebat, had caused Israel to commit." 2 Kings 15:9**

Are you aware of unusual patterns in your family for generations? Very pronounced patterns of evil may indicate the need for healing the family tree. Maybe the oldest sons of the last three generations attempted suicide, or an exceptional number of women in the family became mentally ill, or the youngest daughters for three generations were alcoholic and unfaithful to their husbands. On the other hand, maybe the oldest daughters for four generations became missionaries, or 80% of the men in the family for six generations became outstanding Christian leaders. These patterns are not coincidences.

**INHERITANCES**

**"For I, the Lord, your God, am a jealous God, inflicting punishment for their fathers' wickedness on the children of those who hate Me, down to the third and fourth generation; but bestowing mercy down to the thousandth generation, on the children of those who love Me and keep My commandments." Exodus 20:5-6**

We all understand the concept of a material inheritance. After people die, they often leave money, property, and possessions to members of their family. We also are aware of a physical inheritance. Doctors always ask for the family history of a new patient by asking questions like: "Did anyone in your family ever have diabetes, high blood pressure, a stroke, heart trouble, etc?" There is also a spiritual inheritance. We can thank God and our family for the benefit from our virtuous ancestors going back a thousand generations (see Sir 44:10-12). We are also adversely affected by the sins of parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents, and by the sins of the ancestors who adversely affected them.

**INHERITANCE AND FREEDOM**

**"Only the one who sins shall die. The son shall not be charged with the guilt of his father, nor shall the father be charged with the guilt of his son. The virtuous man's virtue shall be his own, as the wicked man's wickedness shall be his." —Ezekiel 18:20**

In material and physical inheritances, we do not exercise our free will. We inherit \$1,000 or diabetes whether we want to or not. But we can freely choose to accept or not accept our spiritual inheritance. This freedom is possible because Jesus has broken our bloodline by shedding His blood on Calvary. We can choose by faith to give our lives to Jesus, be born again, enter God's family, and inherit only the good and nothing of the bad.

**TWO TREES****2**

**"But if we are children, we are heirs as well: heirs of God, heirs with Christ." Romans 8:17**

The principal way of "healing the family tree" is to change trees — from the tree of our family to the tree of Calvary (see Acts 10:40). We do this by sharing in the death and resurrection of Jesus through baptism and through living by faith in Jesus as Lord. "This means that if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old order has passed away; now all is new!" (2 Cor 5:17)

## REPENTANCE

**"You are no longer a slave but a son! And the fact that you are a son makes you an heir, by God's design." —Galatians 4:7**

Even after we are born again (Jn 3:3,5), change our inheritance, and become heirs with Christ, we can sin and thereby choose to inherit the evils of the old life. Therefore, the principal way for committed Christians to heal their family tree is by repenting and confessing their sins.

## TRIGGERS

**"Then in anger the master handed him over to the torturers." —Matthew 18:34**

Doctors tell us that we were born with many of the diseases that surface in our adult years. These diseases were in a latent state for years but were triggered by extreme tension, medical problems, or medication. In triggering the bad aspects of our spiritual heritage, sexual sins and sins of unforgiveness especially seem to be instrumental. Therefore, in healing the family tree of committed Christians, we must focus on repentance from unforgiveness and the breaking of sexual bonding due to sexual relations outside of marriage (1 Cor 6:15-16). (For more details on this, see our pamphlet, [Unforgiveness Is the Cause](#) and our book, [The Bible on Sex](#).)

## HEALING AND UNTIMELY DEATHS

**"Jesus likewise had a full share in ours, that by His death He might rob the devil, the prince of death, of his power, and free those who through fear of death had been slaves their whole life long." —Hebrews 2:14-15**

Even committed Christians who are repentant, sometimes need further healing for their family trees. But often in healing the family tree, it is difficult to get past the symptoms and get to the heart of the problem. Untimely deaths often are the key to getting to the heart of healing the family tree. As we inherit our material heritage after a family member dies, we also inherit our spiritual heritage through death. Happy deaths often open us to claim our good inheritance while untimely deaths in our family history can open us to our bad inheritance. For example, when we begin to minister healing of the family tree, we should ask about miscarriages. These babies should be named and through prayer put into God's hands.

We also should ask about sudden deaths in the family history through suicide and/or abortion. And we should ask about deaths in the family where circumstances were such that there was no funeral Mass, service, or burial, or where circumstances prevented the family from attending the funeral. If we focus our ministry of healing on these untimely deaths, we will often see great breakthroughs.

We should also ask members of the family if any of them have used birth control pills. The most commonly used pill probably prevents conception only about 98% of the time. Thus, couples who used "the pill" may not know how many children they have conceived. They should ask the Lord how many children they have. If, after praying for a day, they think it is possible that they have aborted a baby through "the pill," they should repent, name the child, apologize to the child, confess their sin, and thank the Lord they are forgiven. This is also necessary for chemical abortions done in other ways than by using "the pill." (See our pamphlets: [Sexual Sin, Abortion, and 'The Pill'](#), and [Hope and Healing Through Aborted Children](#).)

## THE ULTIMATE FAMILY REUNION

**"That is why I kneel before the Father from Whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name; and I pray." —Ephesians 3:14**

We heal our family trees primarily by receiving a new nature through total commitment to Jesus. Secondly, we heal our family trees by repentance and healing. But what if some family members won't accept Jesus or won't repent? Our family trees can be significantly healed even if only a few members of our families turn to Jesus. But for deeper healing we should pray daily for those family members who aren't living for Jesus and share our faith with them as the Spirit directs us. (See our pamphlet, *Leading Your Loved Ones to Christ.*) We need not be discouraged for "it is no part of your heavenly Father's plan that a single one of these little ones shall ever come to grief " (Mt 18:14). The Father wants your family saved and healed so much that He sent His Son to die for them (Jn 3:16). In a little while, the Lord is planning a family reunion in heaven. And, if He has His way, not one of your family will be missing. Alleluia!

***Nihil obstat:*** Reverend Robert J. Buschmiller, August 29, 1991

***Imprimatur:*** † Reverend James H. Garland, Auxiliary Bishop and Vicar General of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, September 5, 1991

The *Nihil obstat* and *Imprimatur* are a declaration that a book or pamphlet is considered to be free from doctrinal or moral error. It is not implied that those who have granted the *Nihil obstat* and *Imprimatur* agree with the contents, opinions, or statements expressed.