

## Moral Decadence in Homes and Schools

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### INTRODUCTION

This article was presented on *the Men of God Preaching the Gospel (MOG) WhatsApp Group* in Nigeria, with the aim of sensitizing preachers and teachers of God's word on the need to arrest moral decadence. Morals involve the concept of values; what is right compared to what is wrong, mindset for behaviour in a community or environment. *Moral decadence is the decrease and/or decay of ethical values and norms that govern an individual and the society at large.* The home is foundational to the cultivation of moral discipline while society as a whole is meant to uphold a good standard. A typical home consists of parents, children and live-ins like relations, servants, etc. The society involves homes, as well as religious, educational, professional and other institutions.

### THESIS

Moral Decadence is evident in increased sexual immorality; from pre-marital sex, rape, adultery to child-pornography, homosexuality and bestiality, etc. It is highlighted in increased reports of ritual killing for money, kidnapping, human and drug trafficking, cyber-crimes, bullying, exam malpractices, cultism, etc. The society and its media are dominated by those who portray laxity in sexuality, for instance by promoting fornication via glorification of condom and abortion, mocking virginity/abstinence and professing cures for STIs. It is increasingly difficult to live a righteous life in our society; the saints must continue to look unto Jesus and not the people around them for hope and how to conduct themselves. The Lord and his apostles forewarned of this end-time decadence.

*Matthew 24:11-13 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.*

*2 Timothy 3:1-5 This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.*

**Roots and Causes of Moral Decadence include:** Parental Abandonment, Unsavoury Examples for Children, Ignoring God and His Word, Esteeming Riches, Power and Fame regardless of Means of Acquisition, Impunity of Rulers and Delayed/Perverted Justice, etc.

Children from a tender age pursue schooling in one form or the other because parents are busy with work. From age three months, a baby would spend of the daylight with a caregiver at a Crèche, then Nursery, etc. unless the mother is "self-employed or non-worker." Children left alone are starved of intimacy, connection and proper orientation. Many Youths learn from experimentation by themselves, from peers, TV and social media using Internet-enabled technology. Whist there is indeed economic crunch and pressure in most societies; such are self-inflicted due to the rat-race and pursuit of vanities. Eking out a living ought not to take away most of one's time from his/her family. **No amount of success**

**at work can compensate for failure at home!** We should train children the right attitude to authority, wealth acquisition via work, sex education on their body changes and continence, the fear of God, etc. Many Parents live an ungodly life and do not set good examples for their children or wards. This is reflected in speech and how others are treated, dressing, business, etc. Such misdirected kids will likely grow to emulate what they saw and heard not knowing that such is flawed and sub-optimal. Children raised in abusive homes, broken homes, etc. are more susceptible to replicate such behaviours.

When a family has daily devotion by praying and studying the word of God, it cannot but help imbibe morals and invite divine guidance upon the members.

*Genesis 18:19 For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.*

*2 Timothy 1:5 When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also.*

A balanced form of education requires that teachers impart academic knowledge and moral values on students. Unfortunately, this is dwindling as the teachers are hardly motivated, are sometimes harassed by wealthy/powerful parents for disciplining wayward pupils, or the instructors are lacking in sound character, etc. Many concepts of the past like sports, debates, quizzes, guided excursion, etc. are lacking in schools today. It is mostly about, studying, lessons, and online studying - all work and no play! When play is introduced, the pupils are not properly monitored and guided as recently seen in [Chrisland School](#) and [Dowen College](#), Lagos. Even tertiary education is comatose as the government has not dealt fairly with the various workers unions. Morally decadent students cannot graduate to become very productive and exemplary workers or citizens. Social studies abound that show a correlation between morals and societal development. All the great empires of old like Babylon, Rome, etc. declined as their immorality increased. Today, the high and mighty has not used their influence aright, justice is often delayed or perverted, only the rich are respected hence the quest to make it quick or hammer or blow by the youths. When multi-nationals sponsor BBNaija and similar shows or contests with millions but best graduating students can hardly get a prize of N100,000 then we have setup the society for decadence. ***Such nation will surely reap what it sows.***

The church must teach people how to live aright, love their neighbour and the Lord. Proper religious (spiritual) instruction which emphasizes self-control, compassion and contentment is necessary for building conscience and molding personality, this will help arrest moral decadence in the populace. Government must clamp down on religious extremists who engage in open perversions, hate speech and undermine the good law for orderliness of society. The prosperity gospel of the denominations, especially the Pentecostals who say "claim it" and the Motivational Speakers who say "fake it until you make it" - has NOT helped matters. Neither has our much theorizing about love and godliness in the Lord's church, we need to balance it with practice.

As individuals, the solution is to build God fearing homes; marry those who share our faith and values, take responsibility for raising our children and be watchful of what goes on in their school. While women are home-keepers (Titus 2:2-4), men are saddled with leadership (1 Timothy 3:4-5). That is

expected of even those who are not church officers. So, know your child's friends, make scheduled and unscheduled visits to their schools, and get your offspring to be your friend. Do not always criticize, make it a point to encourage them, speak positively and allow them to make decisions after guiding them to identify the possible options and consequences. Kids are like arrows shot from a bow: you give it a direction and initial push but it must go the rest of the way, counter-balance the friction and sway along the way by itself. It is never too late to impact our children. The surest way is to keep communicating with them and to communicate with God on their behalf in prayers.

## CONCLUSION

If every home is well-grounded, society will improve. Thus, I conclude with the following self-explanatory passage...

*Colossians 3:18-23 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them. Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord. Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged. Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God: And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men.*

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q1. A situation where our children spend their formative years ( Primary to secondary school) among those of other faith or misbelief set of people called teacher, how do we delearn what they have learned in school?

**Ans:** The formative years are spent at home with parents and in school. The school is to COMPLEMENT not supplant override in moral instruction. Their focus is academics then civic behaviour. Some don't even have religious studies in their curriculum. There is a certain standard that regulators expect from schools and that should be met. Parents must scrutinize the textbooks used and raise concerns when justified to demand change, as well as other issues when necessary. If a school is not giving adequate or normal moral instruction, parents can withdraw a child and change to another school.

Q2. Most children obey, fear outsiders more than their parents

a. Why is it that way?

b. What can parents do not to send a wrong signal that you are not telling them to disobey others?

**Ans:** Children should be open to their parents and vice versa. While some school teachers may be strict, if there is evidence such are misleading the kids then one can report to Principal or Ministry of Education. Once, my ward was intimidated by a Headmistress, who asked pupils to pay for materials the Lagos State government freely provided. We called the Deputy Governor's Office to report. The woman was suspended and the dilapidated school was then rebuilt.

b. Parents must be familiar with the laws of the land and the word of God. Once your children know you are guided by and live on these, they will trust your judgment over that of outsiders.

Q3. I have seen that in many homes, all the children are morally good but one is not. What can be the cause of this, even though the parents tried their best to give them equal attention?

**Ans:** There could be any reason for this - randomness, child deviancy based on unique personality, the enemy's attack to make this a burden which the Lord permits to serve as a trial and teaching process, etc. We must do our best at all times and not give up, praying for personal strength and divine guidance upon such child.

Q4. If a father decides to drop stick in the training of children but rather adopt talk and having conversations or rebuke when they go wrong, is it right?

**Ans:** Initially, using the rod and advising will go together as Solomon said. After puberty, more of talk and counseling and the stick should give way. There are several ways of chastening a child without physical beating e.g. grounding by restricting to stay in-doors, depriving of certain luxury temporarily, etc.

Q6a. How can parents guide children on the right use of technology, especially phones?

b. At what stage can children be allowed to own Android/smart phones?

**Ans:** Let them know the primary reason is for communication. Other benefits include for learning and using productivity and entertainment apps. When a child can use smart phone depends on both the society, family and child in question. I will say between 11 and 15 years or definitely when in Secondary School. However, such use **MUST** be regulated. Parents should monitor the apps installed on it. **Can get to Lock/Open the phone remotely, use it to track location, etc.** Must teach responsible usage until the child is over 18 to take responsibility as an adult.

Q6c. They are not allowed to use phones in boarding schools, why can't emulate this and buy them phones when they are about entering the Universities or at 15years?

**Ans:** I noted the society matters too. Children in Middle School (JSS) are allowed to have phone in several developed countries so long they don't use it as distraction during class. During Lockdown, each pupil in public Elementary and in High School in USA was given a Notebook by the County School Board. It was a special one for education and regulated websites access.

In Nigeria, it is better to get a child a smart phone and guide such on how to use it productively while in Sec. School than to gift such all of a sudden when s/he is leaving home for university. Sudden freedom without prior usage experience under your supervision may provoke unnecessary experimentation and misrepresentation from peers. Surely, such need it for JAMB online registration, research, result-checking, etc.

Q6d. On age group issues, can we compare ours with what is obtainable in US/UK, where 13/14 years are on their way to university, but here such is still in secondary school? Both advancement and advantages are they the same?

**Ans:** No 13/14 years old is on way to university in USA. Such are just finishing Middle School and entering High School. **Do what is best for your household in your own society.**

Q7. You cited the example of Timothy mother and grandmother that were in reference to his upbringing, isn't an indication that mother has more influence over the children, as they are in their custody more than the husband. Will it be out of place to place more emphasis on women high moral standards in church, so that we can have children like Timothy, and not excluding the men to give proper direction to the women and live same.

**Ans:** Agreed but both parents should be involved as much as possible. I also cited Abraham and a man ruling his own house well.

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