



## **ONLY A PREACHER'S KID IS ASKED**

J.J. Turner, Ph.D. ©

I have been thinking about the stressors the children of preachers must endure. I know they are there because I have two grown children who were raised as PKs. Children of preachers are expected to do numerous things the children of members aren't expected to do. Notice for example some of the following professions or occupations that place no demands on the children of those who practice or work at the vocation.

1. Why aren't the children of plumbers asked to fix leaking pipes?
2. Why aren't children of physicians asked to perform surgeries or attend medical briefings?
3. Why aren't children of carpenters asked to build houses or repair houses?
4. Why aren't the children of lawyers asked to go to court or interpret certain legal rulings?
5. Why aren't the children of anchor persons on news programs asked to prepare a new release?
6. Why aren't the children of truck drivers asked to properly park big rigs?
7. Why aren't the children of policemen asked to enforce the speed limit on the freeway?
8. Why aren't the children of electricians asked to string wire in a new house or repair electrical problems?
9. Why aren't the children of veterinarians asked to deliver baby calves or give dogs their shots?
10. Why aren't the children of coaches asked to show up at all team meetings?
11. Why aren't the children of dentists asked to pull teeth or to recommend a favorite toothpaste?
12. Why aren't the children of barbers or beauticians asked to style or cut hair?
13. Why aren't children of counselors asked for advice or to sit in on counseling sessions?
14. Why aren't children of motivational speakers expected to always be filled with energy and zeal; never in a negative mood?
15. Why aren't the children of prize fighters asked to train in the gym and learn how to punch people in the nose?



16. Why aren't children of firemen asked to sleep at the fire station and respond to fire calls?
17. Why aren't the children of public school teachers asked to prepare lessons plans and always be in class on time?
18. Why aren't the children of CPAs asked to file tax returns or know the latest tax laws, or how to keep books?
19. Why aren't the children of salespersons in clothing stores asked to wear the latest and appropriate styles?
20. Why aren't the children of judges expected to be perfect, free from problems and hang-ups?
21. Why aren't the children of the next door neighbors expected to have perfect parents?

Get the point? It is only the children of preachers who are expected to be different and involved in all church activities. They must know the Bible, be ready to share, dress appropriately, go only to certain places, have selected friends, be present at all activities with a smile, and so forth. If they make a mistake or sin, it is not only a sign they aren't genuine Christians, but it is a reflection on their father who is a preacher. He failed in his responsibility as a parent. In fact because of problems with his children he may be asked to move. No so in other professions! Why?

We have a double-standard in many congregations; one set of rules for children or members and another set for the preacher's kids. This has created a false sense of security, pessimism, unhappiness and wearing of masks by both the preacher and his family. They must not be seen as mere humans; they are saints and spiritual giants. They live by the Book. They live in a glass house open to all for visits and inspection. They alone must practice hospitality frequently.

No wonder many children of preachers resent the church and their father's ministry. Some, thankfully, move through their childhood years as PKs with great attitudes and commitments to Christ and His church. This is largely because of their godly parents who protected them from unreasonable demands by some members of the church. Others tried but it didn't work.



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It is difficult for our children to live a “normal” life in this upside down world, much less to have the added stress of being a preacher’s kid. We must do all we can to eliminate this double-standard.

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