

Fulton County Gospel News

Good News About Christ And His Church For All Of The World

“. . . Christ is the head of the church: and He is the Savior of the body.” - Ephesians 5:23

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PLEASE, SAVE THE CHILDREN!

(Part 2)

What Can Parents Do? (continued)

by Ted J. Clarke

INTRODUCTION

In “Part 1” of this topic we called attention to the great and ever present need of parents to not only provide for the physical welfare of our children, but to especially concentrate on nurturing the souls of our children. Jesus asked, “*For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?*” (Matthew 16:26). We also noted that **parents**, not the church, have primary responsibility for providing this religious training for their children. See Genesis 18:19; Deuteronomy 4:9; Proverbs 1:8; Ephesians 6:4; 2 Timothy 1:5. We also studied in part Deuteronomy 6:2-6. This chapter is a tremendous admonition to parents, outlining the intensity with which we should approach our roles in developing our children’s religious responsibilities. This article continues the study of Deuteronomy 6.

TEACH THEM DILIGENTLY

Verse 7 requires that parents teach the words of God “*diligently unto thy children.*” The word “diligently” is from a Hebrew word that refers to sharpening arrows or a sword. As the sharpening stone is repeatedly rubbed across the weapon head in order to arrive at the desired degree of sharpness, so the words of God are to be repeated and recounted over and over to the minds of our children, in order to insure their “sharpness” in knowing and doing God’s will. Dear Friends, **one of the most important ingredients in training your children spiritually is time.** If you are not willing to give your children a large portion of your time during their formative years, you will not

accomplish what God expects in nurturing your children’s souls! If you do not spend the time necessary to hone your children’s minds to a razor sharp edge, they may not be able to meet the spiritual challenges the world will throw before them each day of their lives. Of course, you cannot teach what you do not know, so God’s commandment to teach our children diligently will also insure that every parent knows and acts upon God’s Word. Brethren and friends, take the time and obtain the resources available to engage in a diligent study of God’s Word for both yourself and your children. You could not spend your time in a more worthwhile pursuit (cf. Ecclesiastes 12:13-14).

If you were not able to do another thing in your life but have time to make a living and to train your children properly in the ways of the Lord, you would have the most rewarding life possible and never regret one moment of the way you spent your time. On the other hand, those who neglect proper spiritual training for their children will regret it much in this life and perhaps for all eternity. Parents, let’s give our children the time and effort they deserve and the chance for eternal life.

TEACH THEM IN THE HOUSE

We must take time in the home to teach our children properly the ways of the Lord. Parents must “*talk of them [the commandments of God] when thou sittest in thine house*” (verse 7). Since the Bible teaches us God’s truth about every area of our lives, the common conversations around the house should be filled with

references to what God’s Word has to say about the everyday events in the lives of the family. How do we deal with problems in personal relationships; between parents, children, friends at work or school, neighbors, brethren? How can we do good to those we meet regularly or occasionally? What should I do when there is something else I want to do that conflicts with attending worship or Bible study? Did I do my daily Bible reading and offer my daily prayers? Have I searched God’s Word for answers to my problems and prayed about them? How does the world (school, magazines, movies, TV, songs, government, community, friends) approach the matters of daily life? Accordingly, how can we live **in** the world but not be **of** the world (John 17:14-19; Romans 12:1-2)? All of these topics and more should be open to daily discussion in the home among family members.

Parents should introduce these matters into the discussion when the children will not bring them up. Remember parents, you are involved in diligently training your children. You cannot expect them always to talk about these things voluntarily. By talking with your children regularly you should be perceptive enough to know these various issues need to be discussed. Talk with other parents, buy books and other resources that will aid you in better understanding your children; but understand that the one authoritative resource for instructing your children on what is proper behavior and what is not is the Scriptures!

TEACH THEM IN THE WAY

The “way” refers to a “road; figuratively, a course of life or mode of action” (Strong’s Heb. Dict. # 1870). What this means is that life away from the home constantly provides opportunities

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for parents to instruct children about the ways of the Lord. Children can be shown firsthand how people of the world live in contrast to the way God instructs His people to live. In a great number of instances parents can show children the consequences of disobedience to God's Word and the many ways sin brings heartaches and complications to one's life. A preacher friend of mine, who lived close to a tavern, was once walking with his son as they approached a man hanging onto a streetlight pole. The man was vomiting all over himself. The young son asked his father, "Daddy, what is that man doing?" The father replied, "Oh, he's having fun." When the child asked his father how that could be fun, the father explained about drinking alcoholic beverages to supposedly feel good and how alcohol affects the mind and body. In the course of his explanation the father told of what God's Word said in passages like Proverbs 20:21; 23: 29-35 and others. Real life situations often provide the best settings to reinforce the truths for living from

God's Word. The same type of real life situations can be used for powerful lessons about drugs, sexual immorality that leads to unwanted pregnancy or venereal disease, lying that destroys trust and friendships, stealing or other crimes that lead to jail, reckless driving that may lead to paralyzing injuries or death, and a thousand other matters. On the positive side, do not neglect to show your children real life examples of doing good to neighbors, strangers, brethren, and the community in general.

Parents, know what is going on at school, among your children's friends, in your neighborhood, or the community at large. Use those opportunities to magnify the good and expose the evil of things that are in the world and before your children's eyes. **Do not just generalize with "don't do that" type of statements; use the Bible to show them that God's Word is always right and provides the greatest insurance, when followed, against suffering from the wages of sin, here and hereafter!**

TEACH THEM AT BEDTIME AND MORNING

The continued admonition is to "talk of them [God's commandments] . . . when thou liest down, and when thou risest up (Deuteronomy 6:7). Raising spiritual children is a full time job. The last thing you should teach your children at the end of the day is about the goodness of God and the guidance of His Word to keep us in the right path of life, speaking of the blessings such always brings. Praying with one's children is a blessing in itself and provides a role model for them to follow throughout life. Teach them to pray about specific things in their lives and to pray specifically for others. Assure them that God hears and answers the prayers of His faithful children. Encourage them to think about the blessings they receive from God each day to give thanks for His good gifts (James 1:17). Tell them to ask for God's help with the problems in their lives and for wisdom and courage to do right each day.

Each morning parents have an opportunity to teach their children to celebrate the life of a new day, thanking God for a night's rest, praying for health and blessings for the new day. You also have the opportunity to reinforce any needed teaching from the day or night before and to **put God in your children's minds from the very start of each day**. Discuss the possibilities for doing good each day as well as warn against the temptations to sin that may come from various avenues. Encourage your children to use their minds and to think about what God's word says in any given situation. Remind them that the psalmist said, "Thy word have I hid in mine heart that I might not sin against thee" (Psalm 119:11). Children will not always do the right thing, but when they fail you will have the opportunity to teach them about repentance and God's gracious love and forgiveness. Those too are vital lessons for them to learn.

TEACH THEM TO KEEP THE WORD OF GOD CLOSE

Verses 8-9 speak of the custom of the Jews to write portions of the Law of Moses on parchment and attach them to different parts of their bodies and the houses in which they lived. Some commentators think that Moses was speaking figuratively and that his real intention was to teach that the Jews were to ever keep the Law of God before them as they lived out their daily lives. Still, although not many people had full copies of the Law, having printed sections of specific parts of the Law could remind them of God's will for them. The obvious meaning Moses intended is that Scripture is to guide us as we live our daily lives and we should keep God's Word close by, in our hearts or in written reminders.

We are so blessed today to have printed copies of the entire Bible so readily available. We can carry them in our pockets, purses, briefcases, lunchboxes, and cars or just about anywhere. There are usually copies in motels and hotels, doctor's offices, and various patient and waiting rooms in hospitals. Nearly every

bookstore sells Bibles, some admittedly not as reliable as others. But the Good Book is generally everywhere. How sad most do not read it nor heed its teachings. Parents, make certain your children have a reliable copy of God's Word and instill in them a reverence for it and a desire to know it (Nehemiah 8:-1-8). Everything you can teach them about God's will is in the Bible. See that it is always close by for them.

CONCLUSION

One final observation will close our study. Parents are to live their lives in such a manner that it provokes religious questions from their children. In Deuteronomy 6:20-21, Moses wrote, "*And when thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What meaneth the testimonies, and the statutes, and the judgements, which the Lord our God hath commanded you? Then thou shalt say unto thy son . . .*" What? What does one say to a child that asks about the meaning of God's commandments? Talk about the deliverance from bondage that God has provided; to the Jews freedom from slavery in Egypt, to those under Christ deliverance from bondage to sin. Tell them why God has done what He has done and the blessings that come to us through our obedience to Christ (Matthew 7:21; Hebrews 5:9).

When we connect the principles of Deuteronomy 6: 24-25 with the gospel of Christ, these give our children motivation to follow God's will today. The Scripture says to tell our inquiring children, "*And the Lord commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the Lord our God, for our good always, that he might preserve us alive, as it is this day. And it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the Lord our God, as he hath commanded us.*"

We commend this study to you, praying that it will help **save the children**, the children of Christian families, and that it will help us reach out to those who are lost throughout the world.

WHO AM I TO ASK WHY?

by Bob Spurlin

We have during our human experience, no doubt, participated in the philosophical discussions of the overall theme "why me" or "why did this happen Lord?" Life can be difficult to understand with hardships, terminal disease, unexpected death and loss of a job. These are difficulties that befall the human family at one time or another and will determine our character and spiritual well being. This writer has enjoyed a full and rich life with a wonderful wife, two children and the sheer pleasure of working with the church of the Lord for thirty years. Like so many others it appeared as though we were unaffected and seemed impervious to the evil about us.

Suddenly this writer became very ill with a progressive type of multiple sclerosis that has caused a bedridden existence for more than six years. Losing one's dignity and being dependent upon your spouse and other family members for the most basic care became very humbling. Yet, four days after the diagnosis was made our beloved daughter, Bethany Ann, 16, suffered a useless and fatal automobile accident. My wife and I were in a state of shock and delirium, not because our sweet daughter was unprepared for the eternal world, but due to the human factor that separated us from our daughter and the void created in the family.

As a minister of the gospel for three decades many horrible and ghastly events have confronted this writer in counseling fellow Christians and non-Christians alike. Primarily many would place culpability upon others, while most will seek to cast all blame upon our God. The supreme God of the universe is not the author of destruction and calamity. Paul writes that "God is not the author of confusion, but of peace" (1 Cor. 14:33). James writes "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man" (James 1:13). Our eternal God has all in control even though, at times, it seems the world has gone awry. Many have

tried to put God at fault and consequently He becomes an easy target when something evil or unknown happens that we cannot control or come to some resolution.

The book of Job reveals the "sons of God coming to present themselves to the Lord and Satan also accompanied them" (Job 1:6). The Lord quizzed Satan "Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and upright man, one that feared God and escheweth (shuns) evil?" (Job 1:8). Satan responded, "Does Job fear God for nought (nothing)?" (Job 1:9). Satan, the source of all evil, charged God that he had set a hedge, or kept him away from all evil, blessed the work of his hands, and his substance (cattle) increased in the land (Job 1:9-10). Satan sets forth a proposition that if God will put His hand on Job and touch all he has then the faithful servant, Job, will curse the Lord to the face. Satan's thesis regarding God's beloved servant, Job, was that his devotion and faithfulness was dependent upon God blessing him. The Lord gave Satan the power to do anything he wanted with Job, however he could not put forth his hand to destroy or take the life of the faithful servant of God.

Satan used the power to do all the evil against Job save taking his life. A servant reported that all sons and daughters of Job were killed when a great wind fell upon them. The Sabeans took the oxen and asses, while killing the servants of their master Job. Another servant informed Job that the sheep and servants were consumed with fire. The Chaldeans formed three bands or raiding parties and swept down on Job's camels and carried them off and his servants were slain with the sword. Then Job rose up and tore his mantle (robe), shaved his head and fell down upon the ground to worship God. Following all the adversity that came into the life of Job, he sinned not and refused to charge God foolishly (Job 1:12-22).

If all the suffering and hardship Job endured was not enough, Satan charged the Lord that his servant would curse him to the

face if his flesh were smitten. The Lord said unto Satan, "behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life" (Job 2:6). This faithful man of God was struck with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown (head). The pain was so great and intense that "he sat down among the ashes" (Job 2:8). For the first time Job's wife speaks, saying, "dost thou still retain thine own integrity? Curse God, and die" (Job 2:9). Job's strength was in God and regardless of what his wife said his loyalty to God would not be shaken. Job was not one to "ask why," but answered his wife, "thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips" (Job 2:10). If we receive good things and positive blessings, may we question God and ask "why," when evil visits at our door? Job's spiritual equilibrium could not be successfully challenged due to his anchor being solidly embedded in the Rock of Ages. Neither his wife, friends, loss of property, livestock nor the loss of all his children would shake this patriarch of the Old Testament. When tragedy and heartache strikes at our door may we be reminded of Job and his faith in God. In the final analysis, "Who am I to ask why?" (James 4: 14-17).

[Editor's Note: The above article is taken from a new book by brother Bob Spurlin, entitled, **Dial 9-1-1: Essentials to Living Life in the 21st Century**. You may remember that Bob is a gospel preacher who has been suffering with Multiple Sclerosis for the past eight years and has been bedfast for the past six years. His condition is rapidly degenerating. Presently he has to depend on someone else for all his needs. His wife, Beverly, has worked teaching school as well as caring for Bob in all her off time. Bob prepared this latest book by speaking into a computer equipped with voice activated software. He no longer has the strength to type, even laying down.

This book, like his last (Tackling Life's Troubles), is written from the perspective of one who has been in the "furnace of affliction" and walking in the valley of the shadow of death. Some of the titles of his

other articles in the book are: September 11th, A Day of Infamy; Formula for Hurting People; Victory Over Grief; The Caregiver; The Blame Game; Will We Recognize Each Other in Heaven; Making Prayer More Meaningful; The Legacy We Leave Behind; and many more. The book, **Dial 9-1-1**, has 208 pages and sells for \$11.50, which includes shipping. You can buy a case of 30 for \$300.00 and shipping is free. Perhaps the elders of your congregation or the preacher will order a case to share with those who are suffering in your church. This book will lift you up and give you strength to help others who are hurting too. The profits from the book go to pay Bob's medical needs.

Order from:
 Bob Spurlin, 2101 Glenwood Dr., Hartselle, AL 35640. Or you can leave a telephone order by calling (256) 773-0295. You will help both Bob and his family and yourself by ordering this new book.

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GOD'S AUTHORIZED WORSHIP - COLOSSIANS 3:17

- 1. LORD'S SUPPER** - The New Testament and early church history record that Christians met on the first day of every week (Sunday) to worship God and remember Christ (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 11:23-34; 16:1-2).
- 2. PRAYERS** - (Acts 2:42; Philippians 4:6-7; 1 Thessalonians 5:17-18).
- 3. SINGING** - God's word authorizes only vocal music and specifically singing (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16; Hebrews 2:12). The New Testament shows no use of mechanical instruments of music in worship to God by the church Christ established. Church history notes no such use for nearly 700 years after the New Testament was completed. It is an innovation of men, not of God.
- 4. GIVING** - Free-willed, cheerful, generous, and every week (Acts 20:35; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; 2 Corinthians 8 & 9).
- 5. PREACHING OF THE WORD** - The gospel of Christ, not men's doctrines nor entertainment, saves and strengthens us (Acts 2:42; 20:7; Romans 10:17; 1 Corinthians 1:18-23).

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