

Sermon Notes for July 10th, 2011

The Importance of Education to our Faith

I. Introduction:

There are two things that have been so important to my life and my success in life:

- My Faith...
- My Education...
- Faith comes from hearing... teaching/education...

Have you ever thought about how traditions pass from generation to generation ... education...

Consider the tradition of Passover and the youngest asking, "Why?" Exodus 12: **24** "Obey these instructions as a lasting ordinance for you and your descendants. **25** When you enter the land that the LORD will give you as he promised, observe this ceremony. **26** And when your children ask you, 'What does this ceremony mean to you?' **27** then tell them, 'It is the Passover sacrifice to the LORD, who passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt and spared our homes when he struck down the Egyptians.'" Then the people bowed down and worshiped. **28** The Israelites did just what the LORD commanded Moses and Aaron.

The Importance of Bible Study needs to be dovetailed with the importance of Bible Teachers, today is Bible Teacher Recruitment Sunday and we are asking everyone to let us know how you can be involved...

Think about this, Education is what makes data and information flow and the process requires teachers. All Satan has to do to hurt and weaken the church is to stop, or confuse, the teaching...

II. Body:

We have all heard that Christianity is a teaching religion, one cannot be a part of the Lord's Church without understanding the process...

Matthew 28:**18** Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. **19** Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.** And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

John 21:**15** When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?"

"Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you."

Jesus said, "Feed my lambs."

Hosea 4:**6** my people are destroyed from lack of knowledge.

"Because you have rejected knowledge, I also reject you as my priests; because you have ignored the law of your God, I also will ignore your children.

II Timothy 3:**16** All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,

Look at all the scenes of Jesus in the New Testament, what's He doing, teaching. Think about it, why? Think about what teaching leads to: understanding, problem solving, maturity, intelligence is keened, order, wisdom,

Where would you be in your faith, your relationship with God without teachers, someone teaching you?

When I think about the faith of my children I have concerns but I also know that the foundation is there and it's there because of a lot of other people, teachers, in their lives...

Our greatest need and responsibility in this congregation is to us, the family here in Cedarloo, and I think especially our children. Again, today is Teacher Recruitment Sunday and we need everybody to consider what God needs you to do, how has He blessed you and

are you being responsible with those gifts... Ephesians 4:11 So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, 12 to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up 13 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. 14 Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. 15 Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. 16 From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

I'd like to draw our attention to two other passages that convey to us the power and importance of what is important in life—why we do things, how we can do things right, and what we can do to be the best we can be. The basic “meaning of life” stuff, please note how important both Bible study and Bible teaching are in these passages.

The first important passage is Deuteronomy 6:4-9, “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.” (NIV)

This verse starts out what is called the *Shema*; it means to hear what God has to say. This saying was, and still is the Jew's rallying cry to know their Lord. This verse also points to the imperative of the next two verses that, in a nutshell, are about memorizing and knowing and doing God's Word. God is commanding us to teach our children and ourselves His Word, so that it penetrates our hearts, minds and will—that is, every aspect of who we are. And, then, we are to write it down and bind it to all our daily aspects of life.

That call is still for us today.

The second important passage is 2 Timothy 3:14-17, “But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” (NIV)

Paul, in this passage, gives us a similar call to heed God’s Word. Here is the call to scrutinize, understand, and then apply Scripture. This is the basic inductive precept. This passage is not an instruction to give the Bible the occasional “once over.” It is the clear, uncompromising call to continue in our studies constantly and passionately.

These two Scriptures call us to live our lives as pleasing to our God, as countless other passages do, such as Proverbs 1, “...fear the Lord...”, which is the understanding and vigorous reverence of God. It is not the fear a child has of what is under the bed. It is the *wow*, the wonder, awe, and majesty of God. And, this understanding is wisdom to deal with life, to make the most out of what He gives us in our gifts and opportunities.

These passages give us the reason and the opportunity. We can teach ourselves, and each other to bring the Word of life into all that we do. And, we can rest in the assurance that the Word is directly inspired; it is His words to be put into our actions, by His guidance and support. Thus, the opportunity is given to us to seize His Word so we can be wise and live our lives with purpose, direction, and meaning. In this way, we can impact our society with dignity and liberty, giving hope and showing the Way. Or, we can ignore Him, as most people do, and live in a meaningless rut, or, as the Bible says, to be foolish. Or worse, we can be teachers of the Word yet refuse to be disciples ourselves, exchanging the truth of the Word for our arrogance and wanderlust!

These two Scriptures lay a clear foundation that we need

to be educated from the Word. The command from Deut. Chapter 6, to teach and be taught, combines synergistically with Paul's proclamation in 2 Timothy: 3 that the Bible is profitable for teaching. The words *useful* (NIV), and *profitable* (NKJV), imply that we actually profit from God's Word. But, this type of profit is not in the money, as we may see from some TV preachers, but in what is important in life. God the Creator of all things, Who has our best interests in mind, desires that we learn and grow. And, we do this through His Word! Thus, we gain our values, our moral center, which is how we are to be to God and to those around us. We also gain our wisdom and knowledge through the Word, as well as learning for our lives. Without the Word, we may have knowledge from life, but we will not have wisdom! A bank teller can identify phony money better by knowing what a real bill is like. The Bible shows us the real One, as well as both who Christ is and how then we are to live. The Bible gives us our instructions on how to live!

The Bible is not just about a list of dos and don'ts, but a love letter that let's us know what is best. The Bible does this by its honesty with its characters, how they failed and how they succeeded. It shows us how we are to view God and each other, how we are to conduct ourselves, and how we are to measure our ideas and activities. It contains all we need to know for salvation and godly living.

So how do we study the Bible? Countless copies of Scripture are sold and sit on shelves and bookcases unread! Why? People do not know how to engage it or how to read the Word of our Lord. They are too apprehensive with fear of conviction or unsure how to go about it. That's why we need Bible teachers and to spend time studying God's Word, people need to be comfortable with God's word and not afraid to jump and read, to study, to ask questions, to have discussions about what God is saying to us.

Again, thinking about my own education, I think the greatest thing I ever learned was how to study and find resources. For example, there are so many things that my job demands that I know about. There is no way that I can possibly keep up with every little specific detail. But, when the time comes that is exactly what I have to do. In order to accomplish this my office is filled with

reference manuals, handbooks, contracts, policy manuals, and books, (not to mention the internet resources that I use as well). I know how to use these resources very well. Right now in my new position at Manchester I am spending my time just getting familiar with my new resources so that when it's game time, I know the rules and can do my job.

The Bible is our life manual without an understanding of how to use it we are doomed to fail. God Himself gives us the directions and the ability to proceed.

“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened (Matt 7:7)”.

“He who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me (John 14:24)”.

“If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him (James 1:25).”

We can make the Bible real in our lives, and in the lives of our students; so, let us not be filled with fear or with apprehension, but put our discouragement away and have confidence that we can go before God by the power of His Spirit, through His Word!

We must be people who remove the objections in regards to studying the Bible and stop making excuses as to why we can't, or won't, teach.

III. Conclusion:

Ward came forward last Sunday night lamenting that he could no longer teach and concerned that he wasn't doing what he should be doing... That is the spirit of service that we need and are looking for...

Philippians 3:10, how do we get our kids to get to the point where they sing this song? It's teaching, that's where the heart of a Christian is born!

New International Reader's Version (NIRV)

Philippians 3:10 I want to know Christ better. I want to know the power that raised him from the dead. I want to share in his sufferings. I want to become like him by sharing in his death.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness...

I am asking you, us, today to step forward and make a difference in this family, in this community, in your life...