



Teaching, It's In The Word Deuteronomy 11:18-21 Westport Christian Church July 11, 2010

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all those who do His commandments; His praise endures forever. (Ps 111:10 NASU)

Life is a matter of building. Each of us has the opportunity to build something -- a secure family, a good reputation, a career, a relationship with God. But some of those things can disappear almost overnight due to financial losses, natural disasters and other unforeseen difficulties.

If and when that happens, what are we to do? Daniel Webster offered excellent advice, saying, "If we work on marble it will perish. If we work on brass, time will efface it. If we rear temples, they will crumble to dust. But if we work on men's immortal minds, if we imbue them with high principles, with just fear of God and love of their fellow-men, we engrave on those tablets something which time cannot efface, and which will brighten and brighten to all eternity." (Morning Glory, July 3, 1993)

In the past few years, millions of dollars have been spent on education. This seems to always be a hot topic during the election times. I think we can all agree that education is vital to the progress of this nation, but what about the church? How much of our time, money and effort is put into educating our people for the cause of Christ? Who is it that should be receiving this education and what should be the focus of it? These are very good questions that we must ask ourselves.

The type of training and education that we are doing is it productive? When we talk about training or education what is the group of people that we first think of? It's the children is it

not? Do you know what the Scriptures tell us about education in the church? The Greek word for “teach” occurs 97 times in the New Testament. Of those 97 times, 19 of them refer to the church’s responsibility to teach a specific age group. None of the 19 refers to teaching children or youth. All 19 refer to adults! So, if I were to ask you who is to teach the children, your answer must be, parents.

"You shall therefore impress these words of mine on your heart and on your soul; and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. "You shall teach them to your sons, talking of them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road and when you lie down and when you rise up. "You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates, so that your days and the days of your sons may be multiplied on the land which the LORD swore to your fathers to give them, as long as the heavens remain above the earth." (Deut 11:18-21NASU) Now, listen closely, I do not want

anyone to get the idea that I think we should not be teaching the children in church. That is not what I am saying at all. We MUST be teaching the children when ever and wherever we can. However, in order to get things back to what the Scriptures teach us about teaching, we must have a strong adult education program. Think about it for a moment. If the parents are to be the ones instructing at home, then the parents must have an understanding of the Scriptures, do they not? The church

must educate the adults while continuing to offer great children programs. Lets begin our journey of adult education.

I. What are we to teach?

A Father and his small son were out walking one day when the lad asked how electricity could go through the wires stretched between the. “I don’t know,” said his father. “I never knew much about electricity.” A few blocks farther on, the boy asked what caused lightning and thunder. “That too has puzzled me,” came the reply. The youngster continued to inquire about many things, none of which the father could explain. Finally, as they were nearing home, the boy said, “Pop, I hope you

didn’t mind all those questions.” “Not at all,” replied his father. “How else are you going to learn?!” (Our Daily Bread, Friday, January 9) So what are we to be teaching? The answer is, we must teach the Scriptures and an understanding of how to study. One of the first things we are to teach is the basic of what we believe. That is why it is important from time to time we go back and review what we believe and why we believe. If we were to send our children to school and their first year the teacher is teaching Algebra, will our 5 year old understand? Of course not, yet that is the same way it is for a newborn child of God.

There are those who when they first become a Christian want to learn everything, and learn it now! One of the first thing that I say to them is, “You wouldn’t give a new born baby a big bite of steak to chew on would you?” Most people will say, “No.” “Why not?” Because they’ll get choked! That is the same way it is with a newborn in Christ. They will get choked! On the other hand, if you don’t feed a newborn what happens? They don’t grow and if it was for a long period of time, they would die. It is the church’s responsibility to teach adults and we must start with a firm foundation. We must build upon the firm foundations based on the Scriptures. Jesus said, "Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock. "And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock." (Matt 7:24-25)

Jesus wants us to realize that we must build our lives upon the firm foundation of His Word. When the storms of life come and they will. When temptations come along and they will. When our faith gets weak because of the many difficulties, and it may. Then we must have that firm foundation to keep us standing.

Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, and overflowing with gratitude. (Col 2:6-7)

If we all agree that a good education is important in order to provide for our families, then how much more important is teaching adults the Word of God?

We must begin with the basics. That is why Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15 “For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.” (1 Cor 15:3-4)

We must start with who Jesus is and what He has done. We must start with the basics and build upon a firm foundation. Oh, why should we teach adults? Because Christ commands us to teach. “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you.” (Matt 28:18-20)

So this brings us to our next point.

II. How are we to teach?

I believe Paul was instructing Titus on how this should be applied. “But as for you, speak the things which are fitting for sound doctrine. Older men are to be temperate, dignified, sensible, sound in faith, in love, in perseverance. Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good, so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, so that the word of God will not be dishonored. Likewise urge the young men to be sensible; in all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, with purity in doctrine, dignified, sound in speech which is beyond reproach, so that the opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us.” (Titus 2:1-8)

The church has lost something very important, which is simply this, the mature adult believers are to teach. The mature adult believers are to instruct the young believers all aspect of sound doctrine.

Unfortunately, the older folk have lost patience with the younger, and the younger have lost respect for the older folk. This must be stopped and turned around. I realize that this is easier said than done, however it's not impossible. When we realize the importance of our roles and strive to have a true servant heart, then God will lead us in the direction we need. There are many ways to teach, however, let us consider two at this time. First, the class room setting. I feel that it is important to set in a formal setting because it sets the tone for learning. This may be difficult for some but it doesn't have to be boring and should not be just a time to pool thoughts or ideas together, there must be instruction taking place.

Secondly, through fellowship and building relationships. Jesus often taught while building a relationship with people. In John chapter four, Jesus met a woman at a well. He started His teaching by building a relationship. This began with a simple request, "give Me a drink." Now, this may have sounded very strange to the woman and even to us today. What we must look at is how Jesus carried on a conversation with the woman. When the moment was right, Jesus brought to light the spiritual truths that she had been looking for. It is through the building of relationships that people come to know who we are. You have heard me say several times, "people don't care how much you know, until they know how much you care."

The world today is looking for the truth and we must share it with them. When I was working in the factory, there was a big need to get ISO certification. What it basically was you had to document what you did, why you did it, and how you did it. Another words, if you said you were going to do something a certain way then that was how you were suppose to do it, that applies to the church today. If we tell people that we are Christians but don't act any different than the world, are we doing what we say?

Bonding together in unity in the Body of Christ is a great way to grow. Not only that it is Scriptural. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful. Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father. Col 3:15-17

We are to teach by building relationship, bonding together, instructing one another with thankfulness in our hearts to God.

III The Purpose For What We Teach.

To equip one another for service in God's Kingdom. Before Jesus ascended to heaven, He told the disciples what they must do. Matt 28:19-20 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you." Jesus tells us the purpose for teaching is to make disciple. This process is to continue on, make disciples and so the cycle continues. Christian Ed is, a Biblical guided change that develops disciples into mature men and women who wish to live by the rules. The rules found in the Scriptures and the understanding that they apply to them.

It MUST be a continuing process of growth and development to make mature disciples. To many times when a person has followed through with becoming a Christian, they are left on the edge of the baptistery to learn for themselves. Let me remind you that Jesus said, teaching (making disciple), baptizing them, and teaching some more. We must teach them the Scriptures. This will enable them to understand the Bible and to help them to understand their duties as a Christian American in following Biblical principals in everyday life events. Guiding them to an understanding of remaining true to the Scriptures on salvation and good works for the glory of God.

Conclusion; Education is so very important for the body of Christ. So what are we to teach? We teach the Scriptures. To understand God's Word and the purpose He has for their life. How are we to teach? By every means possible-in the classroom and in life.

I had someone ask me, "Why should I come on Sunday mornings, Sunday night or Wednesday night for Bible study?" The answer is simple, to become a better servant for God. When Jesus was asked about those who will enter heaven, He simply said, those who do the will of My Father! The purpose for our teaching is to lead others to a saving grace in Christ Jesus. To make disciples, edifying the saints, training them to make disciples. Using our spiritual gifts to be Kingdom builders not pew sitters.

Paul wrote, the things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. (2 Tim 2:2) **AMEN**