

Sunday Morning Message

March 3, 2024

Let's Get Back to the Bible

Text – Deuteronomy 6; Psalm 1; Joshua 1:8

Congregational Reading –Deuteronomy 6:4 - 9

Introduction

In Deuteronomy Six, we have Moses' instructions to the nation of Israel just prior to their crossing the Jordan River and entering the Promised Land of Canaan after being delivered from slavery in Egypt for 400 years, and then wandering in the wilderness of the Sinai Peninsula for another forty. God is preparing his people for successful living in their new home. He does not want them to live like the very wicked people who had previously occupied the land. He wanted Israel to have the very best blessings on their lives. He wanted them to have good success. For God's people to have good success in life, they need to learn and live the Word of God. Joshua would remind them of this principle:

*"Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest. This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, **and then thou shalt have good success.**" (Joshua 1:7-8)*

Do you want to be successful?

Do you want to be successful in the will of God?

Do you want your children to be successful?

God has a recipe for success contained here in the Bible.

I must warn you, however, that God's definition of success will be different than what this world may have told you.

Accumulation of Wealth

Acquisition of Toys

Achieving a prominent position or power

You may achieve all these things, and they are not necessarily bad things; but they do not mean you are successful in God's eyes.

A guy who is truly successful in the eyes of the Lord may have had to sacrifice a better position at the job, because of his commitment to the Lord.

A truly successful person may be one who cannot afford all of the extras in life, but he doesn't rob God either in order to get them. He may not be able to afford the new car or a more expensive house, or a trip; but his tithe check is always there, and the missionaries are getting their promised offering.

Someone once said,

“There is something worse than failing before men, and that is succeeding in something that doesn't matter to God.”

Webster says that success is a favorable or prosperous termination of anything attempted – a termination which answers the purpose intended.

Well, if our intended purpose is to fulfill the will of God in our lives, then all we need to do is understand and obey the instructions contained here in Psalm 1.

What is the purpose of a Christian? What are you here for?

1 To glorify God – make God look good

This generation of man is certainly not glorifying God.

"Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened." - (Romans 1:21)

2 To be Christ's ambassador to this lost world

"And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." - (2 Corinthians 5:18-20)

3 To fulfill the Great Commission

Parents, your goal is to raise children that will do these three things.

David would also emphasize the importance of the Word of God:

"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment,

nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish." (Psalm 1:1-6)

This psalm will not just tell you how to be prosperous, it will tell you how to be happy. "Blessed" means – "O how happy"

In the New Testament, the Apostle Paul reminded his young son in the faith, Timothy, the importance of the Word of God:

"But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." (2 Timothy 3:14-17)

In our text, Moses is admonishing the fathers to teach the Word of God to their children so that they would be able to love God and live out His principles in front of a world that didn't know about God. Israel was to be a shining light to the rest of the world, a beacon of Truth. The world around them would see that there were a very prosperous people living in the land of Canaan that were mightily blessed of God.

As we examine this text, let us pay special attention to the emphasis on parents leading the way in instructing their children.

Examine the Text – Parents were given the awesome privilege to teach their children to:

I. Love God and His Word (vs. 1 – 5)

Parents are to be good examples – they were to lead the way.

Notice the promises that are associated with loving God:

A. Prolonged Days (v.2)

Just being obedient to your parents will prolong your days:

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth." (Ephesians 6:1-3)

Being obedient to God will also prolong your days.

B. Increase Mightily (v. 3)

This means many things:

1. They would increase in number.

2. They would increase in strength.

3. They would increase in wealth.

Parents were to lead the way in this by example. They were to love God themselves and they were to lead their children in loving the Lord.

Moms and dads and grandparents – God is good – very good. Your job is to present an accurate picture of the importance of the Lord in your life. Make God look good to your children and grandchildren. Be excited about living for the Lord. Lead the way in loving God and loving His Word.

Your children can only love God if they:

II. Learn About God Through His Word (vs. 6 – 9)

Parents – Your job is to:

A. Know the Word of God Yourself (v. 6)

The phrase “in thine heart” means that you know the Book so well that you practically have it memorized. You are very familiar with it.

Illustrate – You become familiar with what you are interested in – i.e. hunting; football

Parents – how well do you know the Word of God. Do you read it, study it, meditate upon it, memorize it, come to the church to hear it preached and taught.

Your children are well of aware of how much emphasis you place on the Word of God – they are watching, and they are following.

B. You Must Make Sure That Your Kids Learn the Word of God by:

1. Teaching it to them yourself
2. Talking about it often – Look for ways to apply Bible principle to every area of life.
3. Taking them to church – every service (Illustrate – Lee Roberson - “three to thrive”)

Parents – Your responsibility is to flood your home and their lives with the Word of God. Make it interesting; make it fun.

III. Live for God in Obedience to His Word (vs. 10 – 25)

Note on Verse 16 – “Massah” was the place where they were out of water, and they complained to God and even said that they were better off back in Egypt.

Obviously, the next logical step for us is to obey what we learn. If we love God, and we learn about God and what He wants us to do, we then need to obey Him.

Notice also in this section the constant emphasis on remembering. We don’t just learn the Bible just once; we need to be constantly reminded of its truths.

Preachers need to be specific in their applications of Scripture. Readers and listeners need to be specific in how they apply the truth to their lives:

There is a story of a frontier settlement in the West whose people were engaged in the lumbering business. The town wanted a church, so they built one and called a minister. The preacher was well received until one day he happened to see some of his parishioners clawing onto the bank some logs that had been floating down the river from another village upstream. Each log was marked with the owner's stamp on one end. To his great distress the pastor saw his members pulling in the logs and sawing off the end where the telltale stamp appeared.

The next Sunday he prepared a forceful sermon on the text "Thou shalt not steal." At the close of the service, his people lined up and congratulated him: "Wonderful message, mighty fine preaching." However, as the preacher watched the river that week, he saw his parishioners continuing to steal logs. This bothered him a great deal. So, he went home and worked on a sermon for the following week. The topic was "Thou shalt not cut off the end of thy neighbor's logs." When he got through, the church membership ran him out of town.¹

For example – in this message we emphasized the importance of the Bible. That statement gets and "Amen" out of all of us. But how specifically are you going to apply what you heard to your life today.

- Are you going to commit to reading the Scripture every day?
- Are you going to make sure your family spends time every day in the word?
- Are you going to commit to being in church where you can hear the Word preached and taught?
- Are you going to look for specific ways for the Scripture to be applied to your life? Tangible ways? Measurable ways?

Conclusion

The result of loving God, learning about God, and living for God is that you will be mightily blessed in this life, and rewarded for your faithfulness in eternity. Fathers who diligently teach their children about God will be greatly blessed in the knowledge that they have successfully passed down the faith and preserved it to the next generation.

John the Apostle said:

¹ Michael P. Green, ed., *Illustrations for Biblical Preaching: Over 1500 Sermon Illustrations Arranged by Topic and Indexed Exhaustively*, Revised edition of: *The expositor's illustration file*. (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1989).

"I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth." (3 John 1:4)

Illustrate – My wife and I receive a great deal of joy from our children. Though, we are now separated from three of our children and seven of our grandchildren by many miles, we are extremely blessed in the knowledge that they are all serving the Lord.

Parents, I want to encourage you to never give up trying to be a godly influence to your kids, no matter what you may have done in the past, and no matter how old your children are. If you have children, it is never too late for you to be a good parent – Loving God, learning about God and teaching Him to your children, and then living out those godly principles in your life.

And, if you do not have children of your own, you can be a godly influence on the children in this church. America needs more godly mentors and leaders.

Parents, we need to lead the way in our homes, in our churches, and in our communities. We need to be the godly example and influence that we need to be to preserve the faith to the next generation.

Daniel Webster said, "If we abide by the principles taught in the Bible, our country will go on prospering and to prosper, but if we and our posterity neglect its instruction and authority, no man can tell how sudden a catastrophe may overwhelm us and bury our glory in profound obscurity."²

I think we are all seeing that catastrophe taking place before our eyes. Our nation is failing because it has forsaken the Bible. Our families will fail if we do not live out the principles and diligently teach the Word of God to our children.

We need to get back to and stay with the Bible.

² Herschel H. Hobbs, *My Favorite Illustrations* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1990), 21.