

Let's Go To School!

Introduction:

- I. Some kids like going to school and some kids don't. Those who don't like going to school usually go to school for all the wrong reasons. They want to socialize with friends and have a good time harassing teachers and clowning around in class. But then there are the few students that realize that there is a higher purpose for going to school. School is a place you go to in order to get an education. You go to school to learn. And what kids need to know today is that the more you learn, the better equipped you are to deal with life and to be successful.

- II. But may I suggest to you that the best education available today is that which can be attained by following Christ. Christianity is an education. In Christ, we learn and develop, both mentally and morally, and we equip ourselves to deal with all of the fiery darts of the devil. In fact, if we are not being educated in Christ, we really aren't disciples of Christ because a disciple by definition is someone who is learning. We need to go to school in Christ everyday. We need to be striving to get a spiritual education, learning more every day how to live for Christ and prepare for the life which is to come (**Matt. 11:28-30**). We all need to be learning of Christ. The church is the school house. God the teacher and the Bible is the text book. So, let's go to school and see what we can learn.

Lesson:

I. **We Must Learn To Fear God (Deut. 4:10).**

"... the Lord said unto me, Gather me the people together, and I will make them hear my words, that they may learn to fear me all the days that they shall live upon the earth, and that they may teach their children.

Listen to me: one thing that God wants; one thing God demands is that His people fear Him. And the fact of the matter is the whole world ought to fear God. It's a shame that we live in a world that so boldly and brashly fights against God today. Man as a whole has developed the Pharaoh mentality. Through Moses and Aaron God told Pharaoh, "Let my people go." And Pharaoh said, "Who is the Lord that I should obey His voice...?" That was a question of both arrogance and ignorance which many people in the world today share. Well, let me tell you who God is today. He's the one who created the universe and everything therein with just the power of His word.

Rev 10:6

"...who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein..."

This is Who God is! He's the One Who said, "Let there be light," and there was light. He's the One Who said, "Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters," and it was so. He's the One Who said, "Let the dry land appear," and it appeared. He's the One Who said, "Let us make man in our image," and man was so created. You want to know Who God is? He's the One Who formed you and shaped you and gave you the body and soul that you now have. That's Who God is!

Who is God? I'll tell you Who He is! He's the One Who knows all things. Pay attention now! He knows how many hairs you have on your head. He knows how many grains of sand are on the seashores and He knows how many stars are in the heavens. Do you know how many stars are in the heavens? Of course you don't because they are innumerable. It used to be that man thought that there were no more than 3,000 stars in heaven, but with the invention of great telescopes, it was discovered that there are over a hundred billion stars in our galaxy alone, and that there are actually trillions of galaxies of which ours is just average. Now pause a minute and consider the greatness of God. How many stars has God created? Trillions and trillions! Now listen to Isaiah.

Isa 40:26

Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that brings out their host by number: he calls them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power; not one fails.

Who is God that I should obey Him? That's Who He is?

Who is God you ask? I'll tell you Who He is! He is the Alpha and the Omega; the first and the last; the beginning and the end. Listen to the Psalmist:

Ps 90:2

Before the mountains were brought forth, Or ever You had formed the earth and the world, Even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.

That's Who God is! He's the one who transcends time. He's the One that has always been and will always be. That's what the Bible tells us about God! That's what the universe tells us about God. So if there is one thing we ought to learn from the facts about God is that we better give Him the reverence and respect that He so richly deserves. We better fear Him **(Matt. 10:28; Eccl. 12:13)**.

Now how do we know if we really fear God? Or perhaps the better question is, how does God know that we fear him? The bottom line is this: God knows that we fear Him by our obedience (**Gen. 22:1-12; Heb. 11:7**).

But let me tell you something else. God knows that we fear Him by our devotion to His doctrines and our commitment to His commands. He knows we fear Him by our steadfastness to His statutes and our passion for His principles. He knows that we fear Him by our tenacious observance of His teachings and our persistent adherence to His precepts. In other words, God knows that we fear Him when we abide in His Word (**Deut. 10:12-13**).

Deut 10:12-13

And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, 13 To keep the commandments of the Lord, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good?

Walking in the ways of the Lord emphasizing not only obedience, but strict and precise obedience. This is what too many people don't understand. We live in a religious world that has concluded that God is always flexible. Now, it is true that at times God doesn't specify what He wants and so He leaves us with some options, but when God specifies there is no flexibility. Never is this truth seen more clearly than when the Israelites tried to transport the ark of God on a new cart (**2 Sam. 6:1-7**).

This new cart represents a lax attitude towards divine authority. It indicates man's willingness to go beyond a "thus saith the Lord" and is a symbol of all human innovations in regard to religious matters. Listen to me: there are a lot of new carts in the religious world today (*musical instruments, liberal practices among brethren, etc.*). These are just a few examples of man's readiness to take his own way instead of God's way and that is a demonstration of a lack of fear. We need to go back to school and learn to fear God! David learned the lesson.

II. We Must Learn To Maintain Good Works (Tit. 3:14)

And let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful.

That God wants His people involved in good works is a foregone conclusion.

Matt 5:16

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

Eph 2:10

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Titus 2:14

Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

We need to be involved in the good works of God. We need as individuals to live by his book and listen to me, we need to learn to maintain the good works that we do. We need to learn to be consistent in the application of God's Word to our lives (**Josh. 1:6-8; Jn. 15:1-7; 1 Cor. 15:58**). Paul know a little something about maintaining (**2 Tim. 4:6-7**). And these same principles would apply to local churches as well as to individuals. Let's not a church that begins good works but doesn't finish them. Let's learn not to quit. Let's learn not to give up no matter how badly the devil wants us to. Let's learn to keep working in bad weather; to keep pressing in persecution; to keep striving when we are stressed and to keep reaching when our earthly plans are ruined. Let's learn, in other words, to maintain good works.

III. Learn Not To Think of Men above What Is Written (1 Cor. 4:6).

And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another.

Here was one of the major problems with the church at Corinth. They had a willingness to elevate man above what was written. They divided the church because they were more infatuated with certain preachers than they were with the Word of God (**1 Cor. 3:1-7**). Now, while Paul did a good job at straightening out the church at Corinth, the problem never did go away completely and it ahs plagued the religious world ever since. We must begin to understand that the life is in the seed, not the sower. We must learn that the message is more important than the messenger and the truth being spoken is more important than the speaker.

Listen to me: there are literally thousands and thousands of precious souls that are lost because they haven't learned not to think of men above what is written. The most popular preacher of our time is Billy Graham. Over the last half of century he has preached in what they call "evangelistic crusades" all over the World. The Billy Graham Evangelistic Association is responsible for hundreds of sermons preached every year on TV, radio and in crusades across the country and in others. Billy Graham is such a beloved figure in this country that most people consider his word almost

synonymous with the Word of God. What he says about a subject is deemed as being truth without any real investigation of the Bible itself. Now please know that I am not attacking the person of Billy Graham. He is without question a man of honesty, integrity and moral purity, but he's just a man and the truth is he is a man that has literally led thousands of people into destruction because he is a teacher of error. Do you doubt this? Listen to how he answers the question, "Is baptism necessary for salvation:

"You may know that we urge immediate and extensive Bible study for each convert. As the Scripture is reviewed, the place of baptism will surely be discovered. If baptism were a requirement for salvation, we would certainly say that. But you couldn't support that knowing, for example, that the thief on the cross had no opportunity for baptism or church membership. Yet on his confession, paradise was secured. Jesus said to him, 'Today shall thou be with me in paradise' (Luke 23:43)."

Ladies and gentlemen, that's not what the Bible says. The Bible says that baptism is for the remission of sins (**Acts 2:38**). The Bible says baptism puts one into Christ where all spiritual blessings are located (**Gal. 3:27**). The Bible says that baptism is the place where our sins are washed away by the blood of Christ (**Acts 22:16**). The Bible says that baptism puts us into the kingdom of God (**Jn. 3:5**). When someone tells you that baptism isn't required, even if that someone is the most popular preacher in the world, that someone is teaching you a doctrine that will lead you to hell. And many people are going to spend eternity separated from God because when it comes to Billy Graham, they have not learned not to think of men above what is written.

Rod Parsley is a very popular preacher among evangelicals today. He is the so-called pastor of the Word Harvest Church in Columbus Ohio that has over 12,000 members. He is the founder of the Breakthrough radio broadcast which airs seven days a week, reaching a potential viewing audience of 97% of homes in the United States and 78% of homes in Canada. Breakthrough is carried on 1,400 stations and cable affiliates that broadcast to 160 countries, including 20 translated into the Spanish language and 39 countries from Northern Europe to Saudi Arabia.

Now what is being taught on all these radio and television stations? Well he teaches a variety of false doctrines that can be heard in many mainstream denominations today, but being of the charismatic persuasion, his most obvious error centers around the miraculous workings of the Spirit. He believes and teaches that he has miraculous powers and that he can heal all manner of disease and sickness, as well as financial burdens. Listen to him:

"If you are not walking in the double portion anointing that resided in Elisha, then you need to receive the tangible transfer of God's anointing into your life!"

Do you know how he wants you to do that? He wants you to receive what he calls a prayer cloth by which the transferable anointing power of God can come upon you. He bases this false practice on Acts 19 when some folks were healed by coming into contact with handkerchiefs and garments from the body of Paul. Now I don't have time to go into this in detail, but listen to me: the fallacy of all this is that Rod Parsley is not Paul nor an apostle of Christ. And the truth is miraculous powers ceased with the coming God's complete revelation and the death of the last person on whom the apostles laid hands. How do I know this? Because only the apostles could transfer miraculous powers (**Acts 8:14-23**).

Now all this business of being anointed and being able to perform miracles and such always leads to the same end. These charismatic preachers all claim that they are inspired of God, i.e., that God speaks to them separated and apart from the Bible. Listen to Parsley once again.

"I want you to know how wonderful Jesus is. Right in the middle of the wedding (Jesus) came there to me and said, 'I don't mean to interrupt you,' and told me what to do today just as plain, plainer than I'm speaking to you right now, said it up in my spirit, said to me, 'I want you to teach them on healing.' In my spirit (He) said that to me." (Rod Parsley Audio, "The Double Cure Of Calvary.")

Listen to me: the Bible teaches that the Word of God is complete (**Jn. 16:13; Jude 3**) Whenever we take man's word over the bible, even if he claims to be inspired, we are elevating man too high. A lot folks are going to be lost because of this. Many people need to go back to school and learn not to think of men above what is written. And listen to me: we are not immune to this in local churches of Christ. Many have been led astray by this very thing in the body of Christ. So we must always be careful and demand book, chapter and verse from any and all preachers that grace this pulpit.

Conclusion:

Let's go back to school! I don't mean to some secular college or even some religious college. I mean let's go back to God; back to the Bible and learn of God. The Psalmist once said, *"it is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes."* Learning from God is the best education you could ever get.