



## Lesson 4: January 18 – 24

### Discipling Children

As I was looking for specific texts and quotations to illustrate the points I wanted to make this week, I came across this statement.

“The student of the Bible should be taught to approach it in the spirit of a learner. We are to search its pages, not for proof to sustain our opinions, but in order to know what God says.”  
Education pg 189.1

What is the difference between disciple, discipline, discipling, and disciplining? My spell checker did not recognize the word.

I am the wrong person to speak to this subject

- Absent father for many years
- My presence in Chattanooga is in large part due to the decisions that were made in regard to this topic.
- To a large degree, the shaping of our children’s lives is due to the steady influence of their mother.

What is the age of the class members?

- Do any have children currently under the age of 16?
- This is not a time to gang up on the few people in the room who do have small children
  - Rally around them and encourage them in many ways that we have failed
- If there are few people in here that have young children, why study this class topic?
  - How can we use the information we are learning in our Bible study this week?
    - Our grand children
    - “others”, but word of warning
      - most parents are hostile to outside influence in the raising of their children
- The children of our church
  - By our presence here, we are not in children’s divisions helping out, and unless you are a part, you are not part of the solution.
  - encourage emphasis of church programs
  - mentoring programs in the roles of the church, occupation, life.
    - Growing up, all my contacts with orthopaedic surgeons were with people who did not have a Christian outlook
    - I did not think it was possible to be a Christian orthopaedic surgeon until shown by Dr Forlidas
- We associate with others of like age and interests



- Limits the impact that this class has on other segments of the world
- We have to be intentional to spread our outreach to others with the message God's character and love of all.
- We learn something of our Heavenly Father and His interest in us as His children.
- Members of this class, if they are to have influence, will have to be actively searching for friends and contacts outside of this class.
  - That is true whether we are talking about discipling children or any other age group

Discipling children: what will happen if we get this wrong? Will God have to punish you for your mistakes

## **SATURDAY**

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Memory Text: Mat 21:16 GW

They said to him, "Do you hear what these children are saying?" Jesus replied, "Yes, I do. Have you never read, 'From the mouths of little children and infants, you have created praise?'"

How do we evangelize children?

- Is it appropriate to do so?
- Who is responsible for a child's eternal destiny?
- Is there a group of people that are more important for ministry than others?
  - What is that group?
  - Is there an emphasis that needs to be applied to a particular audience?
  - Should we "target" audiences or specific groups of people?
  - Mat 28:18-20 GW When Jesus came near, he spoke to them. He said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. (19) So wherever you go, make disciples of all nations: Baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. (20) Teach them to do everything I have commanded you. "And remember that I am always with you until the end of time."
- Is there a "market" here? If so what is it?
- Did Jesus target audiences?
  - Did he use the same tactic with the Woman-at-the-Well as with Nicodemus?

## **SUNDAY**

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A couple statements about wrath:

Read first paragraph of Sunday's lesson. Ends with "Truly, the day of wrath must come."

The third paragraph of Wednesday's lesson, in talking about the tragedy of criminal acts against



children, including those that happen within the confines of the church says: *“Criminal acts against children - especially during church-sponsored activities- can destroy a child’s confidence about the church and, usually, about the God of the church **What wrath must justly await those who perpetrate such actions and those who protect the perpetrators.**”*

Why? Must wrath come?

- Is this an imposed penalty by a righteous God?
- As I heard this week on the radio: “Every sin comes with a requirement that must be punished.”
- The day of wrath will come, not because it is decreed, but the universe was made that way.
- You grow what you plant.
- How well your plants grow, depends on how well you take care of what you plant.
- The second law of thermodynamics applies to more than a campfire.
- Sometimes even a well tended gardener experiences blight.
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Read second paragraph *“Under spiritual leadership, Israelites greatly valued their offspring.”*

- What do we/our societies sacrifice to our gods?
  - That which we most highly value: whatever it is
  - What we think is important
  - If truly we believe something to be important, everything that is of lesser value than that supreme entity will be sacrificed to that “god”
- By sacrificing their children, people do not signify how much they value their children, but rather what kind of God they worship.
  - Many Christians sacrifice their children’s future, identities, self confidence, independence, ability for self control to a god that is either controlling and demanding or is unconcerned and inattentive to detail or directions.
  - We are just as wrong if we serve a
    - demanding, coercive god that does not respect personal freedom’s
    - a god that doesn’t care what we do and or how we treat ourselves or our neighbors as long as we provide him with the correct payment.
    - a god that makes up laws to his best interest and enforces them to please himself

For many years, I thought the highest ideal was being a “Christian physician” and I sacrificed everything else to that false god, including my children.

Read the highlighted box at the bottom of the screen

It is not just those “corrupted, evil and degraded people” who hurt their children.

Jeremiah 17:9 GW "The human mind is the most deceitful of all things. It is incurable. No one can understand how deceitful it is.



We are all damaged goods. It is only by God's graciousness, that we may be healed and live for Him.

## MONDAY

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Read the first paragraph

Would God have known what it was like to be a child, if Christ had not gone through childhood.  
Did God 'learn' something by Christ being a human?

Isa 53:11 God's Word "He will see and be satisfied because of his suffering. My righteous servant will acquit many people because of what he has learned through suffering. He will carry their sins as a burden.

Did Christ go back to the Trinity and say: "You just don't know what it is like down there. Give them some slack."

Does the human Jesus have more 'pull' with the Trinity than the pre-incarnate God-the-Son have before incarnation?

What was the purpose of Christ going through childhood?

He would not have been human if He had not.

He would not have "developed a perfect character" which we needed for our salvation, for correction of our own.

The law requires righteousness,—a righteous life, a perfect character; and this man has not to give. He cannot meet the claims of God's holy law. But Christ, coming to the earth as man, lived a holy life, and developed a perfect character. These He offers as a free gift to all who will receive them. His life stands for the life of men. Thus they have remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God. More than this, Christ imbues men with the attributes of God. He builds up the human character after the similitude of the divine character, a goodly fabric of spiritual strength and beauty. Thus the very righteousness of the law is fulfilled in the believer in Christ. God can "be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Romans 3:26. {DA 762.2}

What scriptural helps do we have? Also compare with Romans 5:18, 19

Read Luke 2:40-52 - story of "lost in temple three days" at time of Passover.

Luke 2:52 KJV And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.

What does that word 'stature' mean?

Some Greek lexicons: "of the same age, mature, maturity, :synonyms: age, life, life's span, stature.



Echoed in God's Word Translation:

Verse 52: God's Word Translation Luke 2:52 *Jesus grew in wisdom and maturity. He gained favor from God and people.*

- Like people say: "He grew up"
- He grew up in Nazareth
- "Can anything good come out of Nazareth"
- We chose a 'good' town to raise our children
- So did Lot
- Our town: Asheville NC
  - The Good Things
  - Large number of SDA churches
  - Four SDA elementary schools
  - Two SDA high schools
  - A relatively large Christian medical community
  - There were some aspects of the town that were demon possessed.
  - If you are where God has placed you, He can help you raise God-centered children.
  - The parents need to be God-centered themselves.
  - The parents should create a heavenly atmosphere for their children, wherever they live
  - Christ did not have special advantage in where He was raised

## TUESDAY

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The Bible readings are four stories of Christ healing children:

- Raising little girl from the dead
- Healing the Syrophenician woman's daughter
- The story of the man with the seizing son.
- The nobleman from Capernaum's son

The main points:

- Each child was brought to the attention of Christ by a desperate parent
- He healed them all
- Why does that not happen now? Our questions of anguish at the loss of a child.
- Mourning physical death and observing spiritual decay may be equally painful.
- We must cling to our loving God.

The tragedy of death of a child

The tragedy of a wayward child

God has known the agony of both!

## WEDNESDAY

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Interesting statements:



First sentence of paragraph #2:

“Modern disciplinarians need to learn another lesson: Children need never leave their childlike dependency behind.”

Galatians 5:22 - 23 GW “But the spiritual nature produces love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, (23) gentleness, and selfcontrol. There are no laws against things like that.”

To a Physician Bearing Large Responsibility  
“Elmshaven,” Sanitarium, Cal.,  
August 6, 1902.

My Dear Brother,

“You regard too lightly the sacred truth for this time. You are not, in all things, walking in the light that God has sent you. Beware lest you confederate with unbelievers, accepting them as your counselors, and following their worldly policy; for this is dishonoring to God. The less you expect from the world, the less attention you pay to its flattery, the safer you will be and the surer of securing salvation. The less dependency you place in men who are wise in their own conceit, the better will be your standing before God. There is no safety in trusting in men who do not honor the Lord, who disregard his holy law. The less we expect of such men, whether of temporal help or inspiring example, the less bitter will be our disappointment. {SpTB06 35.2}

And he who depends on his own strength leans on a broken reed. Put your trust in the Lord. Wait patiently for him, and he will cause his name to be magnified. {SpTB06 36.1}

The Lord encouraged you, not because your ways had been perfect in his sight, but because he would not permit those who were opposing a good work to carry out their own ideas and plans, to the injury of his cause. {SpTB06 36.2}

You are taking honor to yourself. You are in danger of placing yourself where God should be. Unless you change, the Lord cannot sustain you in your exalted position of sacred responsibility. The Lord is proving you. Because it is more convenient, you have mixed with the truth that God commanded you to keep pure and holy, the very principles he forbade you to cherish. The principles of truth and righteousness have been turned aside. Unless you depend continually upon God, truth is no safer in your hands than in the hands of those whom you supposed to be your enemies. Some of these are as righteous as you are in practice. Had you made straight paths for your feet, God would have delighted to co-operate with you. At the last General Conference you stood on vantage ground. God called upon you to take a higher stand. But you misinterpreted his purposes. {SpTB06 36.4}



Those who are connected with Christ, the chief worker, will represent his character in all their work. God is calling men, “Come to me as my helpers in the performance of my work.” Righteousness and truth are the habitation of this throne. No man can execute his will who has not surrendered himself to God, that God’s will may be done in him. “Come to me as my right-hand helper,” will be the message to the faithful of the land,—the men who are trustworthy, who will exalt the God of heaven, not merely in their words, but in their deeds; men who can be relied on to do their duty under all trials, and whatever the circumstances may be. {SpTB06 37.3}

Righteous, high-principled, God-fearing men will stand before him as capable of receiving his orders and of executing them with exactitude. The work of such men will bear the similitude of heaven. They will choose as their counselors and helpers only the good and faithful. Our God is a jealous God, and those who fear him, who live as if in his presence, as they surely are, will choose as counselors those who are pure and righteous, who understand the will of God, and who refuse to uphold unrighteousness or selfishness in themselves or in any one else, who will not oppress their fellow-men because they have it in their power to build up or to tear down, but who treat the humble as God treats them, showing them favor. When the heart is purified, refined by the Spirit of God, there will be fewer judgments pronounced upon others, and far more meekness and lowliness will be revealed. {SpTB06 38.1}

To all who obey him the Lord will say, “Dwell with me as my servants.” “He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house; he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight.... Whoso privily slandereth is neighbor, him will I cut off, him that hath an high look and a proud heart will not I suffer. Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me; he that walketh in a perfect way, he shall serve me.” {SpTB06 38.2}

Those whom God shall favor, exalting them to a high place before angels and before men, should ascribe to him all the glory, giving him the praise for their influence and their opportunities. Those whom God has made rulers in his stead, dishonor him when they put self into their work, which then bears the imperfections of the human agent. God demands that both in private and in public life men shall honor him, in the home, in the church, and in their daily business, setting an example which may be safely followed. Those whose hearts are fully with the Lord will not draw one thread of selfishness into the web. Not one jot or tittle of glory will they take to self. {SpTB06 38.3}

The benefits that God bestows are daily renewed, and should be gratefully remembered and acknowledged. Should the Lord deal with men according to their sins, according to their underhand dealing, their departure from righteousness, how changed all would be. His blessings would be withdrawn; his indignation and wrath would be manifested. But he bears long. He allows misfortune and loss to come upon the wrong-doer. If this does not bring him to repentance, he comes close to him in affliction. If none of these things succeed in drawing him to the Saviour, he cuts down the fruitless tree. {SpTB06 39.1}



God is plenteous in mercy. “He will not always chide, neither will he keep his anger forever.” Just as soon as men heed his warnings, and set their own hearts in order, he will make the rough places plain before them. It is God that is dealing with his people. Trials as well as blessings come from him. His hand is to be acknowledged in all. {SpTB06 39.2}

Read the highlighted section at the bottom of the page.

- What does it mean that “their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven?”
- Why should that make anyone who hurts a child tremble?
- What is the point of the statement and that section of Christ’s discourse? (Matthew 18: 1-10)
  - Is that the point of the statement? If we should not look down on these little ones, God places high value on them to the point of having heavenly representation before the universe. Compare to a heavenly congress, senate or Parliament with the representation. They have value.

## **THURSDAY**

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Read Mark 10:13 – 16

Mar 10:13-16 GW Some people brought little children to Jesus to have him hold them. But the disciples told the people not to do that. (14) When Jesus saw this, he became irritated. He told them, "Don't stop the children from coming to me. Children like these are part of the kingdom of God. (15) I can guarantee this truth: Whoever doesn't receive the kingdom of God as a little child receives it will never enter it." (16) Jesus put his arms around the children and blessed them by placing his hands on them.

Read the first paragraph: “what Jesus wanted them to know”

- What did Jesus want them (His disciples) to know?
- See John 17:26 Why did He do all these things and what was His ministry for? “John17:26 GW I have made your name known to them, and I will make it known so that the love you have for me will be in them and I will be in them.
  - That is not an age dependent goal.
- Christ blessed the children that were brought to Him by their mothers.
  - Is this a true statement?**We can only reach children who are brought to Christ.**
- The Saviour regards with infinite tenderness the souls whom He has purchased with His own blood. They are the claim of His love. He looks upon them with unutterable longing. His heart is drawn out, not only to the best-behaved children, but to those who have by inheritance objectionable traits of character. Many parents do not understand how much they are responsible for these traits in their children. They have not the tenderness and wisdom to deal with the erring ones whom they have made what they are. But Jesus looks upon these children with pity. He traces from cause to effect. {DA 517.5}





The Christian worker may be Christ's agent in drawing these children to the Saviour. By wisdom and tact he may bind them to his heart, he may give them courage and hope, and through the grace of Christ may see them transformed in character, so that of them it may be said, "Of such is the kingdom of God." { 17.6}

We have often mentioned in this class how our behaviors, our choices, our actions and our thoughts change our DNA. This causes our offspring to be different in many ways, not all of them good.

Christ has the remedy.

As we cooperate with the Creator, he will pardon, heal and restore us and our children to Him.

## **FRIDAY**

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The Jews were looking for a Messiah to be revealed in outward show. They expected Him, by one flash of overmastering will, to change the current of men's thoughts, and force from them an acknowledgment of His supremacy. Thus, they believed, He was to secure His own exaltation, and gratify their ambitious hopes. Thus when Christ was treated with contempt, there came to Him a strong temptation to manifest His divine character. By a word, by a look, He could compel His persecutors to confess that He was Lord above kings and rulers, priests and temple. But it was His difficult task to keep to the position He had chosen as one with humanity. {DA 700.4}

John was to go forth as Jehovah's messenger, to bring to men the light of God. He must give a new direction to their thoughts. He must impress them with the holiness of God's requirements, and their need of His perfect righteousness. Such a messenger must be holy. He must be a temple for the indwelling Spirit of God. In order to fulfill his mission, he must have a sound physical constitution, and mental and spiritual strength. Therefore it would be necessary for him to control the appetites and passions. He must be able so to control all his powers that he could stand among men as unmoved by surrounding circumstances as the rocks and mountains of the wilderness. {DA 100.4}

In childhood and youth the character is most impressible. The power of self-control should then be acquired. By the fireside and at the family board influences are exerted whose results are as enduring as eternity. More than any natural endowment, the habits established in early years decide whether a man will be victorious or vanquished in the battle of life. Youth is the sowing time. It determines the character of the harvest, for this life and for the life to come. {DA 101.1}

As a prophet, John was "to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." In preparing the way for Christ's first advent, he was a representative of those who are to prepare a people for our Lord's second coming. The world is given to self-indulgence. Errors and fables abound. Satan's snares for destroying souls are multiplied. All who would perfect holiness in the fear of God must learn the lessons of temperance and self-control. The appetites and passions must be held in subjection to the higher powers of the mind. This self-discipline is essential to that mental strength and spiritual insight which



will enable us to understand and to practice the sacred truths of God's word. For this reason temperance finds its place in the work of preparation for Christ's second coming. {DA 101.2}

The student of the Bible should be taught to approach it in the spirit of a learner. We are to search its pages, not for proof to sustain our opinions, but in order to know what God says. {Ed 189.1}

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