

## DAILY BIBLE READINGS - Week of September 8, 2019

### THEME: "Childhood"

#### **Sunday** ..... **Read Deuteronomy 6:4-12**

*"And these words, which I command you today, shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children."* God made it abundantly clear that the home was to be the place where children would learn the truth of God! Childhood and the home is when and where boys and girls should be taught God's Word, both by actual instruction and by the example of their parents. If there is anything the devil wants to prevent, it is the teaching of God's truth to children. If children are immersed with the light of God's Word at an early age, they are far more likely to become solid Christian people in this dark world. This has always been important since the days of ancient Israel, and is increasingly important in the United States. Prior to the infamous, culture-changing, decision of the Supreme Court in 1963 that removed the reading of the Bible from public schools, all children at least had the opportunity to learn God's truth as part of their education whether or not they were privileged to have been taught in their homes. Since that time with the removal of this foundation of the education of our children, we have lost the Judeo-Christian ethic and are increasingly pagan in our social and political lives. We have experienced a diminishing emphasis on church attendance and have suffered severely! Yes, it is important for the parents to identify with a local church that is committed to teaching and preaching Biblical truth so their children have a back-up, not a replacement, for what they have learned in their homes. That is God's plan for children to implement what He said about children being His *"heritage"* in Psalm 127:3. What a start for life on earth that is for a child!

#### **PARENTAL INFLUENCE**

#### **Monday** ..... **Read II Timothy 1:1-5**

*"When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice: and I am persuaded in you also."* Young Timothy had a very fortunate childhood, having been raised in a home where faith in God and His Word was paramount! This passage in God's Holy Word tells of two wives who understood the basic reason for God's creation of the woman as revealed back in Genesis 2:18, where God said this about the man whom He had just created, *"It is not good that man should be alone; I will make for him a helper."* Timothy's father was certainly privileged to have a wife and a mother-in-law who realized the important responsibility given to their husbands by God in Ephesians 6:4, where God told fathers to *"bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."* Timothy's mother and grandmother knew this and proved that they were indeed faithful wives. They have to be thrilled that the Holy Spirit used them as an example for all future wives and mothers by His including this detail in the Bible, which is given for all believers as an instruction book for living. Mothers, there is no greater joy than this!

#### **SOCIAL NEEDS**

#### **Tuesday** ..... **Read Matthew 19:18-20**

*"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."* The earlier in life that a child understands this maxim given by our Lord Jesus about the life of a believer, the better in terms of a favorable social adjustment. If that is a strong point of emphasis in the home in the early days of childhood, the child is far better equipped for entering school when he or she becomes of age. Jesus was telling His followers that they are compelled to love as He loves, and did He ever show His love for people, even to those who hated Him. His love was proactive, not retroactive. He did not merely respond favorably to those who treated Him; He loves the unlovely! Jesus said this about those who mistreat us in Luke 6:27: *"Love your enemies; do good to them who hate you."* A similar instruction is mentioned in Romans 12:21: *"Be not overcome with evil; but overcome evil with good."* That is the victorious life, and if a child learns to do that, he or she should mature pretty

quickly, and make a lot more friends than enemies. Not only that, he or she will be used of God to turn the lives of some people with poor social graces to be more acceptable by many and maybe make friends rather than enemies.

### **SPIRITUAL NEEDS**

**Wednesday .....Read Luke 2:41-43**

*"Now His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover. And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem."* The parents of Jesus were great examples for parents of all children to follow. The Holy Spirit probably had a lot of reasons for including this account of their going to Jerusalem for a special time of worship, but I have to believe one is to emphasize the need for parents to demonstrate that worship should be a huge part of the family life! Early in life, Jesus had the benefits of parents who knew that, one of the reasons why God chose the home of Mary and Joseph to be the family in which His only begotten Son would grow up through His childhood. It is interesting that Jesus, the Son of God who came to be the Light of the world used this special time of worship to "begin" His ministry of teaching, and He astounded those who were privileged to hear this young twelve year old. Yes, like a typical child, He caused His parents some alarm in that they lost Him in the crowd and did not realize it until they were on their way back home. They had to be highly pleased where they found Him, in a house of worship! Their training paid off. Their twelve year old did not want to leave the house of God! That's a good thing!

### **ATTITUDE**

**Thursday .....Read John 13:15-17**

*"If ye know these things, happy are you if you do them."* What a wonderful maxim to drive home to children early in life; it is the key to a happy life: to follow the teachings of our Lord as revealed in the Bible. If a child can be convinced of that, he or she surely has a head start in getting on to growing up. Notice, that the point of emphasis is on doing what the Bible says! It is a great thing to learn God's truth and the instructions it gives for living, but that does little or no good if not put into practice. That is the very thing we are told in James 1:22: *"Be doers of the word, and not hearers only."* Memorization of Bible verses should be a part of every child's life; and children whose mentors teach that their memorizing is not an end in itself, but the instructions on how they ought to live are blessed indeed. One verse memorized and put into practice is worth more than one hundred verses memorized but have no impact on the lifestyle. The words of the psalmist in Psalm 119:9 and 11 are good ones for a child to learn: *"Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to the word of God...Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee."*

### **REPUTATION**

**Friday .....Read Proverbs 20:11-12**

*"Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right."* Yes, early on a child gets a reputation; this is particularly important when he or she reaches school age. What teachers and fellow students see in the child is a reflection on the home; this means that parents can be a strong witness through their children if they put into practice the teaching in the home. Now there is no assurance that a child will be what Christian parents want them to be in their public lives, but the effort is worth the while because of the promise in Proverbs 22:6: *"Train up a child in the way that he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it."* Faith will be tested! The devil is at work and the children of Christians who are serving Christ faithfully are a special target of the adversary. Nothing pleases the devil more than to "take down" a son or daughter of a servant of God. This makes the work of intercessory prayer a necessity as a part of the lives of parents, and of those in the church where they have been placed by the Holy Spirit. A real impetus for the spiritual growth of a child is he or she is successful in bringing a friend to church!

### **SOCIAL PRESSURE**

**Saturday ..... Read Proverbs 1:10-11**

*"My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not."* The earlier in life that a child learns to say "No" to those who would entice him, the better. That may well be the toughest thing for a child to do, but a good thing for him to do. The pressure will come, that's for sure. This is why what I call the pre-school formative years of a child's life so important. If the child learns what God says is right and what God says is wrong, and takes that as authoritative, he or she has a strong foundation on which to lean when the temptations come. It is likely that children at their young age, if treated properly in the home by a loving father and mother, will be able to resist the temptations put in front of them by those who had lacked the training in Biblical standards of conduct. The day will come when the pressures of peers will be much stronger and more influential, so it is vital to be able to resist early in life. The more children feel they are close to God, the more likely they will be able to resist social pressure.