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“From Pastor Sheri’s Desk”

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DO NOT FORSAKE YOUR MOTHER’S TEACHING

Deuteronomy 6:6-7: “And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.”

As I read this verse from the Book of Deuteronomy, I allow my mind to dream a bit, and ponder -- ‘How different would our world look today, if all people had listened to Moses and obeyed this command?’ I’m talking about more than just mental assent, I mean really allowed these words to settle into hearts and truly lived out these words in their families. This would mean there would have been more generations who had connected the dots between God’s commands and how they lived in this world.

We are told that these words “...shall be on your heart...” The only way we will have any value for these words is if they indeed are “*hidden in our heart.*” This takes *discipline*, which as they say, often looks a whole lot like **work!** If we are ever going to be obedient to the next portion of this verse – where we are instructed to “...*teach them diligently to your children...*” we must first make the decision to *store up these treasures* in our heart. So how do we know if these words are really on our heart? Well, fortunately, Scripture shows us that one way to find out what is in our heart, is to take notice of what comes out of our mouth.

Luke 6:45, NKJV, *A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil ^{is}treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.*

And if these words are not on our heart, how will we ever teach them to anyone? I would love to be able to teach you to speak Mandarin Chinese. But there’s one little hiccup with that idea...I don’t speak Mandarin Chinese, ergo, I cannot teach it. And not only are we told to teach these words to our children, but we are to teach them *diligently*. Those of us who have ever been around children for very long can surely understand what is being communicated in the original language. It means to *repeat*, to do a thing *again and again*. This diligence must be in our teaching, but also we are to be diligent in *the way* we teach with the end goal, of course, being that they understand. This requires patience, patience, patience.

When we read this Scripture, we see that this command is anything but a casual suggestion on raising children. It is very involved. It is very thorough. Too many have thought taking their kids to church was the beginning, middle, and end of giving them a good spiritual foundation. Not according to Deuteronomy 6:6-7.

We are told to talk of these words – “...*when you sit in your house...*” The best example of this in my growing up years obviously was my own mother. There was very little that happened in life at school, or with my friends, or at church, or on vacation, wherever we were, that she didn’t consistently...*diligently* bring around to align the commands of the Word with it.

I recall on one occasion I was speaking shall we say, *unkindly* to my brother. Seriously this probably happened one or three thousand times, I don’t recall which. LOL! I will never forget the many, many times she would use the specific tone of my voice as a parable lesson for my life. “*Your husband will not like you speaking to him that way.*” And I remember explaining to her that I clearly will never speak to my future dreamy husband in a cross way. After all, my brother was currently annoying me. But I will never ever be tempted to speak to my future dreamy husband in anything but a kind tone. Ever! So this is one thing that I was sure I didn’t need to be taught for my future...kind of like Geometry. I want to say, “Thank-you mama for teaching me *anyway...again...and again...and again!*”

We are also told to –“...talk of them when you walk by the way...” The point seems to be, that no matter where your feet take you can be and ought to be...your classroom. Again, as I love to say, this means connecting the dots between what Scripture says to us, and how it applies to our everyday walking around – going to the grocery store, driving the freeway, paying taxes life.

Next, we are to teach these words, “...when you lie down, and when you rise.” That pretty much covers it all doesn't it? We should begin the day with God and His commands, and we should end the day in the same way. Our relationship with Him is the *be-all end-all* of our lives. His Word is our greatest treasure, or it should be. But sadly how little it seems to be the case in our culture today...

Proverbs 1:7-8 NKJV, *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, But fools despise wisdom and instruction. My son, hear the instruction of your father, And do not forsake the law of your mother;*

These words in Proverbs reveal awe and reverence for Yahweh. At the very root of this understanding there is an awareness of how little and weak we are in the presence of the Eternal and Infinite God. Therefore the onus is on us to obey His instructions.

But sadly we are living in a world that thinks they are big and strong, and have no fear of God! We have just spent the last year plus fearing many things and many people – from fears of COVID to whatever Dr. Fauci says. I completely agree that we should be taking this terrible virus seriously –but I ask –*more importantly* -- “**Where is the fear of God?**” Oswald Chambers said, “When you fear God, you fear nothing else.”

This is another thing our godly mother's taught us...

Proverbs 31:25, NIV, *She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come.*

One of the many beautiful qualities that my mother was blessed with was a wonderful sense of humor. All of my life I just loved that twinkle in her eye. She has always loved corny jokes, and couldn't wait to share them with people who would listen, i.e., “*Want to hear a funny story about two men? He, He!*” She has always had a joyful spirit about her. I want you to understand, it wasn't an attitude given to foolishness, but a joyful spirit. Scripture tells us more than one place that “*The joy of the Lord is our strength.*” It is an attitude that looks to the future with confidence, not in us, but in God. “...*she can laugh at the days to come,*” because she isn't loaded down with anxious care, but she has an abandoned trust in her God.

Proverbs 31:30, NKJV, *Charm is deceitful and beauty is passing, But a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised.*

I want to wish all of the moms who read this newsletter, a very **Happy Mother's Day!** But I also understand that for some, Mother's Day is not the happiest of days. Maybe you didn't have a mother who taught you in the way I've described. Maybe for one reason or another experiences growing up were completely different than you'd have liked. If this describes you, please let the Words of Scripture encourage your heart...

Isaiah 49:15, NASB, *Can a woman forget her nursing child And have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, but I will not forget you.*

This Scripture shows us that the love that God has for us is even stronger than that love between mother and child that we celebrate every May. The love of a mother for her infant child has always been *the* example we point to as the strongest attachment there is. But God tells us; even they may forget...such a thing, however rare - is possible. But **God will never, ever, ever forget us.**

1 John 3:1, NIV, *See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!*