

#8 Subject: Teaching Children What God Thinks of Them



---- Original Message ----

From: Michele

To: Madsen Method

Sent: Tuesday, July 01, 2008 12:01 AM

Subject: How did you teach your children??

Hi Joe and Sharon,

I printed out what you wrote to me and look it over a lot. I've been reading those verses in Job to help me. **How did you teach your young children to get the concept about what God thinks about us?** Was it just reminding them what God says about them? When talking to the boys, I try to encourage them and let them know what God thinks is most important. Anyway, I just thought I'd email you.

I am looking forward to meeting you in July. Where do you usually stay? We are going to stay at the Hyatt on Friday night. The boys and their Dad will go to the D-Backs game that night and the girls will relax at the hotel.

Blessings,

Michele

Dear Michele,

Children can understand Proverbs just as it is. There is no need to slice it apart and dish it out just because a child is a child. So many do not believe the Holy Spirit's promise to "guide us into all truth." That is not an age-specific promise. Too much watering down and over explaining ends up turning the words of God into the words of man. Then it no longer is Divine Revelation. When we present ourselves before God as a student needing to be taught, He will teach us. What we learn is what we will be able to use personally and in our parenting (and this is the order; first personal, then share). Philippians 1:27 - 2:18 is about personal suffering as well as encouraging others who are suffering. This is what I mean.

What we learn from the Spirit is so personal ... it is meant to strengthen and give joy to us ... usually, we do not study the scripture with others (or another) in mind. We are the ones in the presence of God through His Word. We are the ones in immediate need. We are learning what God means when he informs us that *in Him we live and move and have our being*. How good to know this God! Helping others (including our children) is what we are able to do *after we've been helped*.

I hope to encourage others by this truth about "complete reliance upon God to learn from His Word." **Tools we can rely on must be literal translations of actual words**, not sermonized "this is what it means to me" translations of words, verses, or topics. We don't need to heap to ourselves teachers

having itching ears, as is taught in II Timothy. As a safeguard, the Spirit will quicken to us what is of God, no matter who is talking or writing. He will not allow us to be fooled. We can trust Him to help us follow what is *good, sensible, and pure* (Titus).

Nice to "visit" with you just before I go to bed. Boy, I'm tired tonight. Sweet dreams to you, too.

Love and Prayers,

Sharon

Editor Sherry's Comment: Sharon, I love the Truth spoken in this message. It is what God wants us all to do; to go to Him in His Word, relying on what the Spirit has to teach us as we read. You are so *right on* in reminding us that the Spirit leads us into truth.

----- Original Message -----

From: Michele

To: Sharon Madsen

Sent: Tuesday, July 08, 2008 9:09 PM

Subject: What guide do you use?

Hi Sharon,

You are so sweet! Thank you for your encouraging words once again. Do you have a certain guide you use or just the Bible? I know at the convention last year the Boyer's had a Proverbs for Children to go through with their parents and a study guide.

Michele

From: Sharon Madsen

To: Michele

Sent: Monday, July 07, 2008 6:24 PM

Subject: Follow up to Michele

Dear Michele,

As I reread my e-mail, I rejoiced in more that is part of the recent discussion—how God "strengthens us in our weakness" and how "His strength is made perfect in our weakness." How is it that God, through our weakness, perfects His strength? It's not a Divine vs. Human game. It's about salvation—how He saves us! He will save us. He is saving us. He cannot quit saving us! He bases His promise to save us on Himself. We need to forever hold on to this when we think of our children as well as ourselves. Our children know we have this fixed and holy attitude.

So, I conclude that the equation is this: **My need = His salvation!** Both sides of the equation adjust in harmony; my need never gets lower (as in balancing a teeter-totter) than His salvation; need and salvation are always balanced, equal. This is what I teach my children (my daughter and three granddaughters) by example and words.

With that note of praise, I'll close. Joe just asked me if I was getting hungry. I said, "Yes." He said he was too. We're going to have Chinese flavored vegetables and rice left-overs for supper.

Love to you, dear one.

Sharon

Dear Michele,

I look forward to seeing you at Convention and to rejoice with you in God's great, unfailing love and grace that gives us ability through His Spirit to uncover His Truth. The question, **How did you teach your young children to get the concept about what God thinks about us**, is so important. I believe you are "doing" it because of what you wrote and because of the Spirit who never leaves us in the "dark" but unceasingly enlightens us by His Word of Truth.

The parent teaches *by example* and by *words*. In fact, **example must equal words; they are inseparable**, and from the child's perspective, "words" without "example" teach him that as long as he builds a "white-washed sepulchre" ... gives a performance that looks good... he needn't concern himself about the "dead bones it houses": he observes factually, "What Dad and Mom say and how they live are equal" or, "What Dad and Mom say and how they live are not equal."

I believe what the Spirit writes through Solomon and Paul about the "How did you teach your young children" question. The Scriptures I've been reading in the **New American Standard Bible** (which is the translation I use when just reading) are **Proverbs 22:17-21**, **Proverbs 23:22-25**, and **Ephesians 6:1-4**. If you have an **Authorized King James Version** and a **Strong's Exhaustive Concordance**, you can study the meanings of words from any translation to get a "language picture" of what the Spirit is teaching. The English language often requires several words to give the same meaning as a single Hebrew or Greek word. Therefore, the "full language picture" comes from a study of words in the original languages, which may be accomplished through using **Strong's Exhaustive Concordance**. Other "tools" are available, but this is a good place to start.

The reason I have to go from the Bible I use ... to the King James Version ... to the **Concordance** ... is that the **Concordance** is based on the **Authorized King James Version**. For example, **Proverbs 23:22** in the **New American Standard Bible** reads differently than the same verse in the **Authorized King James Version**.

Specific verses and words I've been studying are **bow** (as in *bow down*) and **ear** (Proverbs 22:17), **hearken** and **despise** (Proverbs 23:22), **glad** and **rejoice** (Proverbs 23:25), **obey** (Ephesians 6:1) and **provoke**, **wrath**, **nurture**, and **admonition** (Ephesians 6:4).

Here are my notes giving the Scripture reference, the King James word, the word's base number in Hebrew (H) or Greek (G), and the corresponding meaning(s) of each word:

Proverbs:

22:17	bow:	H 5186	<i>to envelope; to make blind; to slowly consume without a flame.</i>
22:17	ear:	H 241	<i>to expand; to broaden at the ears.</i>
23:22	hearken	H 8085	<i>to hear intelligently.</i>
23:22	despise	H 936	<i>to rule; foundation of power; a sovereign; a base (to walk) for the feet.</i>
23:25	glad	H 8056	<i>blithe; gleeful; to brighten up.</i>
23:25	rejoice	H 1523	<i>take into favor; to receive, accept, take.</i>

Ephesians:

6:1	obey	G 5219	<i>to hear under (as a subordinate); place beneath (the agency or means through); inferior position.</i>
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6:2 **honor** (I didn't do yet)

6:4 **provoke** and **wrath**

G 3949 (both words refer to the same original word)

to trickle; to scorn; to quiver; to make to be bitter or rebel; to speak off hand;

to stimulate or embitter alongside (like a quarrel, debate, wrangling); to excite to rivalry; to anger (enrage).

6:4 **nurture** G 3809 *to be erect; to set up.*

6:4 **admonition** G 3559 *tutorage; to train (educate); to discipline as a slave or servant or minister to a king; to sting.*

The meanings of **provoke** and **wrath** really convicted me to obey God regarding the "words" I speak and "actions" I take. God has equipped children to "read" their parents, our "ill" and our "good." We are their "Word from Heaven," especially while they are gaining the skill required to "study to show themselves approved..." (this does not change though they become able literally to study the written Word: *parenting is not terminated at age 18*). While the Spirit changes us through our obedience (faith transforms us only when we obey), children see and read a "good gospel" - they look into the "mirror of our lives" and see who God is, what he does, why he may be counted trustworthy, loving, faithful, forgiving ... all the things that are on a person's "this is the God I'd like to have" list! So, we cannot by words alone "tell" what God is like, but we can "tell as we show." **SAY & DO!** God's method of instruction instructs us how to instruct our children.

I am seeing how my words and actions reflect my true heart, showing *my anger and rage and bitterness and lack of trust*. I must not be afraid to agree to these strong words, words the Scripture uses to describe thoughts and emotions. Disagreement with God's word choices leads to substitution of weaker, less true words which do not speak the Truth, therefore do not lead to obedience, and obedience alone provides spiritual understanding. The human heart may know the Savior's love and receive His strength and grace, and overcome by His power and enter into compassion for others ... we may know these aforementioned things only by "doing" what we know to do ... right now ... the thing "at hand" ... **we know God while we are obeying His Words**, not while we are reciting dogma. If I do not do what He says, I only know *about* Who He is. **"I, like you, want to know Christ and the power of His resurrection."**

By studying the above words, I see that my words and actions *trickle* from me to my child and teach him also *to trickle alongside me* in all these traits: *to scorn; to quiver; to make to be bitter; to rebel; to speak off hand; to be stimulated or embittered alongside me (like a quarrel, debate, wrangling); I excite him to rivalry; to be angry (to be enraged)!* The child "reads" my bitterness, rebelling, speaking off hand, stimulation to bitterness against another, therefore against God, quarreling, debating, wrangling, exciting rivalry, anger, rage; even if in pretense I couch it with a smile, or as teasing. He also "reads" these other things at work in me: repenting, groaning, trusting, loving, persevering, forgiving ... the things *obeying* is made of; a child is not fooled, since the Spirit gives him "spiritual discernment" just as He gives it to me.

I see I can't feign a righteous attitude; feign love, patience, or forgiveness. It is God's Spirit Who transforms my wretched self. I have "seen" the Spirit do it! I am learning to pray without ceasing: *"Lord, if any righteousness comes out of me today, it's because your Spirit is doing His work in me. If it's up to me, no righteousness is forthcoming. So, Spirit, do your work in helpless (without strength) me."* And He does. I have the nerve through His promise not to consider "how weak I am" as if "that" has any ability to thwart what God purposes to do in my heart, but to trust myself as well as my family to Almighty God, the *God on my list, the God I would serve if He would save, if I could find a God like that!* (:>) I have found a God like that, and I am walking (present tense) through that old, old door called "obedience"; simply, I obey what He says! I also have observed that I do not receive strength until obey;

strength comes *while I am obeying, as I need it!* "**As your days** (as you live your days), **so** (according to your need) **shall your strength be.**"

The meanings of **nurture** and **admonition** really excited me. **I see what really is going on! God is teaching my children!** God is *making them to be erect; setting them up (upright, as raising one to a position) under His chosen tutors (His Word, His Spirit, my husband, me) to train (educate); to sting them; to discipline them (as a slave or servant or minister to a king is disciplined).* He is fitting them as only He, the King, can fit them for Himself!

Isn't this exciting? Parents may trust the King, and children may trust the King!

Here is the process I use for studying.

1. Read the verse in my translation.
2. Identify the word I wish to investigate.
3. Write down in my notebook the specific scripture reference from my translation where the word I'm investigating occurs, and the word itself.
4. Go to the King James, and find the reference, then the word there.
5. Write down that word, the one used in the King James translation.
6. Find the King James word in the Concordance (words are listed alphabetically).
7. Locate, in the list of scriptures associated with this word, my specific scripture reference.
8. Copy the number assigned to it. This number will direct me either to the Hebrew or Greek section found in the back of the Concordance.
9. Locate the number in the Hebrew or Greek section.
10. Read the definition.
11. Follow the "**number trail**" to its end. See paragraph below. **
12. Track the number trail, and enter each number and meaning to my notebook.
13. Study the meanings of the original Hebrew or Greek word.

** The phrase "**number trail**" means this: Sometimes a word's first number refers to another number, etc. I trace as far back as the Concordance's "**number trail**" directs me. I write down the numbers and meanings of all words I encounter in the trail.

I don't know Hebrew or Greek. But the Spirit gives me insight; I come away with truth. This truth *about* His word ... I must obey it to understand it. Sometimes I weep as the Spirit quickens meaning to my soul, *liberal* meaning given by instruction that contains no reproach." I've found that "reading" the Word is not the same as "studying" the Word. I don't have time to study for hours and hours. (:>) I study little by little. I always come away with special Truth to settle my faith, settle my heart. I just chip away at studying, as I've described. I find in a short time I've added several pages to my notebook and wonderful truths to my heart.

God is blessing you and me; He is faithful. Distrust in Him causes me to misjudge, holding wrong assessments that make me fearful and lead to further disobedient. Why not obey! Why not grab hold of His Word ... "grabbing hold" is obeying. Then we say in truth, "**I trust God!** I obey. I understand. I praise His name! I parent as pleases Him! My children are His tutelage, His workmanship! Oh, Savior, let me walk with Thee!"

Well, this has taken a while to write, but it has been, oh, so good for me too. I'm glad you want to help us at the booth. Until Convention ...

With Love and Prayers,

Sharon M.

P.S. Thanks to Sherry Frattini for editing ***Letters to Teachers***, thereby improving my understanding of the inseparable oral/ written English Grammar partnership.

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