

“I Want My Kids to Know”



Sermons for Families with Children and Young Adults

I Want My Kids to Know...

Proverbs 22:6

I. INTRODUCTION:

A. Parents Must Train Up Their Children—

1. This involves:
 - a. Instruction (Ephesians 6:4)
 - b. Encouragement (Colossians 3:20)
 - c. Discipline (Ephesians 6:4)
2. The good parent models, sets the example, for his children.
 - a. It is difficult to inculcate doctrine with a negative example.
 - b. “Whose faith follow...” (Hebrews 13:7).
 - c. The power of positive example (2 Timothy 1:5).

B. There Are Things Which We Need to Make Certain Our Children Know—

1. The popular TV ad urges us to talk with our kids about drugs and smoking.
 - a. The ad suggests that some parents find it difficult to get around to dealing with these issues.
 - b. The message is don't take it for granted that they understand. Be certain. Sit down and talk about it.
2. Well, I want to use that approach in this study.
 - a. Don't assume your kids understand the matters we will study in this lesson.
 - b. Follow up on this sermon, sit down and talk about it. Find out. Make sure.

II. DISCUSSION:

A. You Are Made in the Image of God—

1. *Creation, not chance!*
 - a. You are not the by-product of a chance combination of amino-acids given sufficient electric charge to self-determine your advance from the primordial seas to dry land and world domination.
 - b. You are the result of intelligent design and eternal purpose (Genesis 1-3; Ephesians 1).

2. *Spiritual, not alien!*

- a. You are not the offspring of alien invaders from outer space. Rather, you are the offspring of God (Acts 17:28).
- b. God is the Father of our spirits (Hebrews 12:9). We partake of His nature (Genesis 1:26). There is that in us which is everlasting or eternal (Matthew 10:28,29).
- c. There is in all of us the desire to find and know our Creator (Ecclesiastes 3:11; cf. Romans 1:20). He is not very far from any one of us (Acts 17:27).

3. *Salvation, not self-glorification!*

- a. There is a purpose for our existence and an explanation for the way things are. Be sure and find it.
- b. You must develop the right worldview. Without it life will be empty and miserable.
- c. Only with God as the center and focus of your reality is there any happiness found in this world (Luke 10:25–28).

B. *The Bible Is the Word of God—*

1. *Is anybody listening?*

- a. “If God speaks and nobody listens, does that mean that God is dead?”
- b. The shelves are filled with books that nobody has read (Ecclesiastes 12:12).
- c. However, God has not gone to the trouble to produce a book that is unimportant.
- d. Any book that claims to be infallible (2 Timothy 3:16,17) and a standard for eternal judgment (Revelation 22:18,19) is worthy of your attention.

2. *Mandatory reading!*

- a. The only way the Bible will ever be of any value to you is by reading it (Psalm 119:11; 2 Timothy 2:15).
- b. Ignorance is not bliss, nor is it an excuse. Life is not a child’s game in which your moves and decisions do not count. “A card laid is a card played!”
- c. Why wait till you have messed up to find out what to do?

3. *Commandments, not suggestions!*

- a. One of the clever billboards that have been seen says with respect to God's Word, "I meant it!"
- b. It is not a take it or leave proposition. It's not "I will if I want to." He willed, now want to (Hebrews 2:1–3a; 10:28,29).

C. There Is Only One Church—

- 1. *"All for one, and one for all."*
 - a. Jesus died in order to purchase His Church (Acts 20:28).
 - b. All who are saved He has added to it (Acts 2:47).
 - c. There are none who are saved that are not in it (Ephesians 5:23–27).
- 2. *"Your Choice, or God's Choice?"*
 - a. We are told, "Join the Church of your choice." When were we given a choice?
 - b. The choice has already been made regarding the Church. Our choice is the same as Joshua's, "Choose you this day whom ye will serve ..." (Joshua 24:15).
 - c. If you choose to serve Christ, you must choose His Church (Ephesians 4:4–6).
- 3. *"Ridicule or Reason?"*
 - a. It's as easy to understand as a man having one wife.
 - b. It's as easy to understand as your having only one daddy.
 - c. It's as easy to understand as a house having only one owner.

D. There Are Wicked People in the World—

- 1. *"I never met a man I didn't like."*
 - a. It is disappointing to learn that there are wicked people in the world.
 - b. It is even more disappointing to find out that some of these folks are among your closest friends.
 - c. It is hard to accept that people that are enjoyable can be wicked, evil or bad.
- 2. *"Evil companions ..."*
 - a. The Bible warns against making friends with wicked men (1 Corinthians 15:33; Proverbs 22:24; 25:17).
 - b. It gives examples of what can happen when a man has a friend that is not committed to righteousness (Proverbs 1:10–19; Judges 16:1–20; 2 Samuel 11; 13:1–5; Matthew 26:48,49).

- c. Childhood friends become adults. Parents, siblings, religious instruction and education influence them. Truth and righteousness may cause a separation (Matthew 10:34–40; Luke 12:51–53).
3. *“Beware, but be friendly.”*
- a. Life is much more pleasant and less stressful if we try and assume the best about people. I had rather be disappointed once in a while than be alone.
 - b. The cynic sees everyone as bad and evil and never trusts anyone or tries to help anyone. The optimist sees what people can be and tries to help them reach their potential (cf. 1 Corinthians 13).
 - c. Christ was an optimist, but He was careful (John 2:23–25). He exhorts us to be the same (Matthew 10:16). You must choose your friends wisely and carefully. Be certain that you give them time and opportunity to prove themselves worthy of your trust *before* you rely upon them.

E. God Hates Divorce—

1. *“I hate putting away!”*
- a. Divorce is a terrible thing. While God has made a narrow provision for it, He hates it just the same (Malachi 2:16).
 - b. It is not His desired purpose for man in marriage (Genesis 3:22–24).
 - c. Any time a divorce occurs somebody sins (Matthew 5:32; 19:1–11; Luke 16:18; Mark 10:2–12; 1 Corinthians 7:1–16).
2. *“If it doesn’t work out we will just get a divorce.”*
- a. Divorce negatively impacts a lot of people:
 - (1) The children
 - (2) The parents
 - (3) You and your spouse
 - (4) Whom you remarry
 - (5) Your friends
 - (6) The Church
 - (7) The nation
 - b. God says you can make it work out, but it requires the total commitment of both spouses.

F. Baptism Is Important—

1. *“Baptism doth also now save us ...”*
 - a. You cannot be saved with out water baptism (Matthew 28:18–20; Mark 16:15,16; John 3:1–11; Acts 2:38; 22:16; Romans 6:3,4; 1 Corinthians 6:9; Galatians 3:26,27; Ephesians 5:23–26; Colossians 2:11,12; Hebrews 10:22; 1 Peter 3:21).
 - b. It is not a work of our own righteousness (Titus 3:2–5; James 2:14–26; Colossians 2:11,12).
 - c. Baptism puts us into Christ where remission of sins is (Romans 6:3,4; Acts 2:38; Matthew 26:28; Ephesians 1:7; Hebrews 10:22; 9:14; 1 Peter 3:21).
2. *However, baptism will not save ...*
 - a. The unbeliever (Mark 16:15,16)
 - b. The impenitent (Luke 13:3,5; Acts 2:38)
 - c. The man–pleaser (Galatians 1:10)
 - d. The lover of the world (Matthew 6:24)
 - e. The closet confessor (Matthew 10:32; Romans 10:9,10)
3. *“Baptism implies an obligation.”*
 - a. Baptism into Christ is not a “rite of passage,” an example of symbolism over substance. It has real meaning.
 - b. The baptized believer is under obligation to God to live right, to conform himself unto the example of Christ (Rom. 6:1–11).

G. Sin Is Black, Hell Is Hot and Eternity Is Forever—

1. *“Sin stains the soul!”*
 - a. There is no such thing as a little sin (1 John 1:6–10).
 - b. God does not fellowship the impenitent sinner (Isaiah 59:1,2; 1 John 1:6).
 - c. We cannot continue in sin so that grace may abound (Romans 6:1–4; Jude 4).
2. *“God will punish sin.”*
 - a. The popular idea is that God is too good and loving to punish sin.
 - b. Remember the flood, Sodom and Gomorrah, and Uzzah (2 Peter 3:4–11).
 - c. Hell is not a fairy tale (Mark 9:44–48; Matthew 25:44–46; Romans 2:5–11).
 - d. God is not slack concerning His promise (Romans 6:23).

III. CONCLUSION:

A. I Want My Kids to Know ...

1. You Are Made in the Image of God
2. The Bible Is the Word of God
3. There Is Only One Church
4. There Are Wicked People in the World
5. God Hates Divorce
6. Baptism Is Important
7. Sin Is Black, Hell Is Hot and Eternity Is Forever

B. Are You A Christian?

1. Believe (Romans 10:9,10)
2. Repent (Acts 11:18)
3. Confess (Romans 10:9,10)
4. Be baptized (Acts 2:38)

How to Ruin Your Influence

Luke 14:34–35

I. INTRODUCTION:

A. Influence Is Important—

1. The value of having a good influence is taught in the Old Testament (Ecclesiastes 7:1; Proverbs 22:1).
2. Christ taught the Disciples the importance of influence (Matthew 5:13–16).
3. Paul affirmed the same (Philippians 2:14–16).

B. What Happens When You Lose Your Influence?

1. “It is good for nothing” (Luke 14:34–35).
2. Your enemies are justified (1 Peter 3:15,16).
3. God is blasphemed (1 Timothy 6:1).
4. Souls are not one to Christ (1 Peter 3:1,2).

C. How to Ruin Your Influence—

1. We are not encouraging anyone in this regard.
2. We are, rather, warning you against it.

II. DISCUSSION:

A. Be Inconsistent—

1. In your life example (Ecclesiastes 10:1).
 - a. The world is always trying to catch the believer in inconsistency.
 - b. This is why they ridicule and mock those that are caught in sin (e.g. Jim and Tammy Bakker, Jimmy Swaggart, the Elmer Gantry type preacher).
 - c. This is the root of hypocrisy (Matthew 23:3)
 - d. The world does not like this in men (Matthew 18:31ff.).
2. In the way you deal with people (Romans 2:3)
 - a. Apply one standard of judgment to your friends and another to your enemies and strangers (James 2:1–12).
 - b. “The legs of the lame are not equal ...” (Proverbs 26:7).

- c. A word of caution to parents (e.g. Isaac and Rebekah), to elders (1 Corinthians 5) to preachers (Romans 2:19–23).

B. Be Unreliable—

1. To be unreliable ...
 - a. *Don't be dependable.* When given a job leave it undone. Don't listen or pay attention to instructions. Never ask a question if you don't understand.
 - b. *Don't be responsible.* Never do your duty consistently, never volunteer and never go beyond what is the minimum requirement.
 - c. *Don't be trustworthy.* Don't do what you say you will do. Never get in a hurry or concerned about be sidetracked. Forget a lot.
2. How do people respond to someone that is unreliable?
 - a. They don't trust them.
 - b. They don't listen to them.
 - c. They don't ask them to do a job.
 - d. They don't give them responsibility.
 - e. They do not depend on what they say.
 - f. They are not influenced by them.
3. The Bible warns against trusting unreliable men (2 Kings 18:21; Proverbs 25:19).

C. Be Unfriendly—

1. Those who are friendly have great influence (Luke 11:5–8).
2. In order to have friends you must be friendly (Proverbs 18:24).
3. The quickest way to lose influence is to be unfriendly.
 - a. I am unfriendly when I am rude and discourteous (cf. Romans 12:20,21).
 - b. I am unfriendly when I don't care (cf. Galatians 6:2; Job 6:14,15; 19:13,14; Psalm 35:13–14).
 - c. I am unfriendly when I don't offer to help (cf. Exodus 23:4,5).
 - d. I am unfriendly when I gossip and reveal secrets (Proverbs 11:13; 17:9).
 - e. I am unfriendly when I don't "come through" and forsake my friends in trouble (Proverbs 17:17; 27:10).
 - f. I am unfriendly when I make a pest of myself (Proverbs 25:17; 27:14).
4. God's word teaches us to be friendly and influence the world (Proverbs 27:17,19).

D. Be Quick Tempered—

1. The Bible warns against being quick tempered or being friends with those that are (Ecclesiastes 7:9; Proverbs 22:24).
2. Why? (Proverbs 14:17,29)
 - a. Joseph Hunter once said, “My life is in the hands of any fool who makes me lose my temper.”
 - b. Solomon said, “He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls” (Proverbs 25:28; cf. 16:32).
- C. The angry man is always getting in trouble (Proverbs 19:19; 29:22; James 1:20).
3. Those that lose their temper lose their ability to influence others for good.
 - a. No one wants to be around an angry man. They are afraid they will get hit, hurt or blamed! (cf. Proverbs 27:3)
 - b. The negative power of anger is indicated in the qualifications for the elder, “not soon angry” (Titus 1:7; cf. Proverbs 15:18).
 - c. The angry man has everyone he knows in turmoil and everything he does in ruins (Proverbs 15:18; 17:14; 29:8,22; 30:33; Ecclesiastes 7:9).

E. Be A “Big Mouth”—

1. The mouth can surely get one into trouble and ruin his influence (Ecclesiastes 9:17; Proverbs 10:19; 18:6,7; Ecclesiastes 5:3; Job. 13:5).
2. Those with the uncontrolled tongue include:
 - a. The braggart (Proverbs 27:2)
 - b. The gossip (Proverbs 26:20–22)
 - c. The “whiner” (Jude 16)
3. To be considered wise and spread a righteous influence:
 - a. *Let your words be few* (Proverbs 10:19,20).
 - b. *Let your words be well chosen* (Proverbs 15:28).
 - c. *Let your words be well spoken* (Colossians 4:6)

III. CONCLUSION:

A. You Have Influence.

B. The First Step Toward Improved Influence Is to Obey the Gospel.

C. Will You Be A Christian Today?

Mistakes Young People Make Revealed In the Bible

Proverbs 1:1-7

I. INTRODUCTION:

A. *The Tendencies of Youth*—

1. It is a tendency of the young to think that they know more than their parents or elders. However, knowledge is not wisdom.
2. There is in youth the curiosity of ignorance and inexperience. This sometimes leads us in the wrong direction.
3. There is an impetuosity that often causes young people to “leap” before “looking,” landing them “hip deep” in trouble.

B. *The Text in Context*—

1. Solomon is writing for the benefit of the young who, for all the admirable qualities in youth, lack without instruction the essential thing, wisdom.
2. The purpose throughout the book is to provide from his own experience and prior instruction of his father under the guidance of the Holy Spirit the necessary lessons for life (cf. 1:33).

C. *Our Objective*—

1. Consider several Old and New Testament examples of young people who for lack of wisdom made serious mistakes.
2. In considering these examples we want to learn both the error and how to avoid it.

II. DISCUSSION:

A. *The Prodigal Son of Luke 15* --

1. The account of this young man’s mistake (Luke 15:11-18).
 - a. He wanted to leave home, get away from parental authority.
 - b. He took his inheritance and wasted it on “prodigal” living, that is, riotous living.

- c. Fortunately, he realized his mistake before it was too late.
 - d. The boy's father welcomed him back into his home.
 2. This young man's mistake is a very common one even in our day.
 - a. Young people sometimes think that their parents are just old "moss backs" and "odd numbers".
 - b. They imagine that their parents were never young, or have forgotten what it was to be young.
 - c. What they do not know is that their parents know too well what it is to be young. They have been young and now they have been older. They know more about being young than you do!
 3. What was wrong with this young man?
 - a. He disregarded the command of God, "Children obey your parents for this is right" (Ephesians 6:1; Colossians 3:20; cf. Luke 15:19).
 - b. He was not responsible. This young man neither knew the "value of a dollar" nor how to take his inheritance and earn a living (Eph. 4:28; Proverbs 6:6-11; 10:4, 5; 20:13; 21:17; 23:20, 21).
 - c. He did not believe that the wealthy always have friends (Proverbs 14:20; 19:4, 7; 17:17; 18:24).
 4. This boy finally did the right thing (Luke 15:18).
 - a. He repented (Luke 15:7).
 - b. He confessed his sin (Luke 17:3,4).
 5. How could this mistake been avoided?
 - a. This boy would not have erred if he had not envied sinners (Proverbs 23:17; 24:1).
 - b. This boy would not have erred had he been willing to listen and learn from his father (Proverbs 6:20,21; 13:1; 15:5).
 - c. This boy would not have erred had he understood the purpose of chastening and discipline (Proverbs 3:11,12; Hebrews 12:5-11).. He repented and did the right thing (Luke 15:18).

B. Cain, Adam's Firstborn—

1. The account of this young man's mistake (Genesis 4:1-8).

- a. God required a sacrifice from them both (cf. Hebrews 11:4; Romans 10:17).
 - b. Cain did not obey God's command (Genesis 4:3).
 - c. Cain was overcome with anger, envy and hatred (Genesis 4:5; 1 John 3:12; Mark 15:10).
2. We hear of different versions of this same mistake today.
 - a. A student is disciplined or corrected at the school for misbehavior and he takes it out on the teachers or the students.
 - b. The Menendez brothers
 - c. A young person does not receive an award, a grade, a club membership, have certain clothes or car; therefore, he is angry at and envious of, those youths that do. Ultimately, his anger gets the best of him.
 3. What was wrong with this young man?
 - a. He would not accept correction (Proverbs 25:12; 9:7-9; 10:17; 12:1; 13:1).
 - b. He did not restrain his wrath (Proverbs 14:17; 16:32; 25:28; 27:3,4; 29:22; Ephesians 4:26).
 - c. He had no pleasure in doing right (Proverbs 1:29-30; 2:14; Psalm 1:2).
 4. Cain was destroyed by his sin.
 - a. He was driven away from his family (4:12).
 - b. He was marked as a terrible sinner (4:15).
 - c. He was ostracized by society in general (4:17).
 5. How could this mistake been avoided?
 - a. Had Cain been humble (Genesis 4:7).
 - b. Had Cain loved his brother (1 John 3:12).

C. *The Rich Young Ruler*—

1. The account of this young man's mistake (Matthew 19:16-26).
 - a. He came to Jesus wanting to know what to do to be saved (19:16).
 - b. Jesus gave him the challenge of being able to give away his wealth (19:21).
 - c. The young man could not do it, and went away (19:22).
2. Many of our youth make the same mistake today.
 - a. They come from families of moderate means, and are encouraged to succeed.
 - b. They are blasted by family, teachers, television, etc. to climb to the top.

- c. As soon as they leave home for college they go to work on their “dream” and the church is forgotten.
3. What was wrong with this young man?
 - a. He trusted in his wealth to make him happy and deliver him from trouble (1 Timothy 6:6–10, 17).
 - b. He did not know the value of his own soul (Matthew 16:26).
 - c. He did not believe in the certainty of judgment (2 Peter 3:5-11).
4. This young man went away from Jesus.
 - a. Jesus can save the rich man (Matthew 19:23-26).
 - b. However, it is hard.
5. How could this mistake been avoided?
 - a. He needed to have learned early on the power and responsibility that prosperity brings (Romans 12:13; 1 Timothy 6:18, 19).
 - b. He should have learned to be a cheerful giver (2 Corinthians 9:6, 7; Acts 20:35).
 - c. He could of avoided this mistake had he known the joy of giving (Romans 12:8).

D. Amnon and Jonadab—

1. The account of this young man’s mistakes (2 Samuel 13:1-18).
 - a. Amnon was in “love” with Tamar (13:2).
 - b. Jonadab encouraged Amnon to contrive a plan whereby he could rape her (13:5).
 - c. Amnon raped Tamar (13:14).
2. This type of mistake occurs often.
 - a. Date rape
 - b. Gang activity
3. What was wrong with Amnon?
 - a. He listened to the counsel of the wicked (Proverbs 1:10, 15–16).
 - b. He let lust get a hold on him (Matthew 5:28, 29).
 - c. He was naive to think that uncommitted sex was pleasant (Proverbs 9:17).
4. Amnon destroyed four lives.
 - a. He destroyed Tamar with the shame and disgrace.

- b. He was the occasion of Absalom's fall.
 - c. He was the cause of David's great sorrow.
 - d. He lost his life and damned his own soul.
5. How could these mistakes have been avoided?
- a. Amnon should have been more careful about who his friends were (Proverbs 4:14,15; 13:20).
 - b. Amnon should have had more respect for God's marriage law (Genesis 2:23,24; 1 Corinthians 7:2,3)
 - c. Amnon needed to recognize that what is in the heart comes out in the life (Proverbs 4:23; Mark 7:20-23; Philippians 4:8).

III. CONCLUSION:

A. From these accounts we learn:

- 1. There are many mistakes that we can make when we are young.
- 2. The consequences of them will follow us all our lives.

B. Be careful not to make these mistakes. We may avoid them by:

- 1. Choosing our friends carefully.
- 2. Respecting the wishes and instruction of our parents.
- 3. Giving heed to the word of God.

Young People Who Pleased God

Ecclesiastes 12:1

I. INTRODUCTION:

A. Today's Youth Are Unfairly Characterized—

1. Turn on the TV or the radio and listen for a story about American youth.
 - a. What you will see and hear is usually negative.
 - b. There are some young people who go out of their way to be rude, crude and obnoxious (young women we saw in doctors office last week).
 - c. Recent reports about the youth of Amarillo in the national media.
2. Such unfair generalization is nothing new.
 - a. This quote from Socrates in about 400 B.C.— “Our youths love luxury. They have bad manners, contempt for authority. They show disrespect for their elders and love to chatter in place of exercise. Children are now tyrants, not the servants of their households. They no longer rise when their elders enter the room. They contradict their parents, chatter before company, gobble up food and tyrannize teachers.”
 - b. All young people are not “bad,” or “lazy” or “immoral,” anymore than all Negroes, women or left-handed persons are wicked, lazy and immoral.

B. The Bible Speaks Favorably of Youth—

1. Youth is a time for great service to God (Ecclesiastes 12:1)
2. Youth is the experience that provides the foundation for life (Ephesians 6:1–4).
3. The most important decisions are made in our youth (Proverbs 2:10–20).
4. A potential for spiritual greatness (1 Timothy 4:12; 2 Timothy 2:22; 1 John 2:13).
5. It is intended to be a happy and joyous time (Ecclesiastes 11:9, 10).

C. The Bible Presents Examples of Young People that Pleased God—

1. The Bible gives a balanced and fair representation of young people.
2. The Bible shows us that there were good and bad, wise and foolish, moral and immoral youths. Furthermore, it makes this revelation in such a way that we can profit from it.

II. DISCUSSION:

A. Joseph Was a Young Person that Pleased God—

1. Joseph was intolerant of evil (Genesis 37:2).
2. Joseph was obedient to his father (Genesis 37:13; cf. Isaiah 6:8).
3. Joseph was lived a chaste life (Genesis 39:7–9).
4. Joseph did not complain about his circumstances (Genesis 50:19,20).
5. Joseph was a forgiving person (Isaiah 50:21)

B. Samuel was a Young Person that Pleased God—

1. Samuel was dedicated to God (1 Samuel 1:26–28; 2:18).
2. He lived in the Tabernacle as a servant (1 Samuel 3:1).
3. He developed a wonderful character (1 Samuel 2:26; cf. Luke 2:40, 52).
4. He was obedient to God (1 Samuel 3:10).
5. He became a prophet at a very early age (1 Samuel 3:19–20).
6. He persevered as a young prophet during Israel's darkest days (1 Samuel 7:1–3).

C. Esther Was a Young Person that Pleased God—

1. Esther was an obedient child (Esther 2:20).
2. Esther risked her life to save her people (Esther 4:10–17).
3. Esther was a great believer in prayer and providence (Esther 4:16).
4. Esther confronted Haman to his face with his evil (Esther 7:1ff).
5. Esther feared not to punish those that would kill here people (Esther 9:13).

D. Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah Were Young Men that Pleased God—

1. With Daniel they did not eat the unclean things (Daniel 1:8, 17–21).
2. They refused to bow down to the golden image (Daniel 3:12).
3. They had an unswerving faith in God (Daniel 3:16–18).
4. Their influence helped convert Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 3:28–29; 4:37).

E. Hezekiah was a Young Person that Pleased God—

1. Hezekiah lived a righteous life (2 Kings 18:1–3).
2. As King he removed idolatry from Israel (2 Kings 18:4).
3. He kept the Law of Moses (2 Kings 18:5, 6).
4. He rebelled against the King of Assyria (2 Kings 18:7, 9).
5. He was confident that God answered prayer (2 Kings 19:15).

6. At 39 he was stricken with a life threatening disease and prayed (1 Kings 20:1).
7. He served God with all his heart (2 Chronicles 31:21).

F. Ruth Was a Young Person that Pleased God—

1. She came from a pagan background to believe in God (Ruth 1:4).
2. Widowed at an early age she accepted the care of her mother-in-law (Ruth 1:16).
3. She was a hard worker (Ruth 2:7, 17).
4. She was considerate and selfless (Ruth 2:11, 18).
5. Ruth was a virtuous woman (Ruth 3:11).

G. Josiah Was a Young Person that Pleased God—

1. He began to seek God at 16 years old (2 Chronicles 34:1–3).
2. At age 20 he began to purge Judah of idolatry (2 Chronicles 34:3–7).
3. At age 26 he ordered that the Temple be repaired (2 Chronicles 34:8).
4. Wept over the finding of the Book of God (2 Chronicles 34:19, 27).
5. Was tender hearted and humble (2 Chronicles 39:27).
6. Led a national revival (2 Chronicles 35).
7. He destroyed the altars at Bethel (2 Kings 23:15)

III. CONCLUSION:

A. Young People Can and Have Pleased God!

1. Joseph did.
2. Samuel did.
3. Esther did.
4. Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah did.
5. Hezekiah did.
6. Ruth did.
7. Josiah did.

B. Will You Please God?

1. Begin by obeying the Gospel.
2. Continue by living a reverent, pure and devoted life.

Jesus, an Example to Youth

Luke 2:39–52

I. INTRODUCTION:

A. WWJD: What Would Jesus Do?

1. The above slogan has been very popular in the last few years.
 - a. “In recent years, church youth groups have started wearing bracelets with the WWJD initials to keep them focused on their spiritual goals. Over 14 million bracelets have been sold in the United States alone” (WWJD.com).
 - b. WWJD has turned into a huge marketing device with an official website where you can order books, music and clothing.
2. The question is based on Charles Sheldon’s 1896 novel *In His Steps*.
 - a. The WWJD cultural movement was born out of Charles Sheldon's 1896 novel *In His Steps* whose lead character suggested that if each person asked "What would Jesus do?" with each decision they made, then the world would be a much better place.
 - b. The plot line is a commendable one. However, the novel is weak on account it was written during the late 19th century after many of the denominations abandoned evangelism for the social Gospel. The book is filled with references to missions, and boards and ministries designed to alleviate the suffering of the masses.
 - c. Today, the story is modernized to deal with AIDS, racial discrimination and homelessness. However, the moral intent of Sheldon’s book is still envisioned but watered down further.

B. Jesus Is an Example to Youth—

1. You do not need a bracelet, T-shirt or Bible cover to stimulate your spirituality.
2. You need to follow the powerful example of Jesus.

II. DISCUSSION:

A. Jesus set the example of following a pure and healthy lifestyle—

1. Luke assures us that Jesus grew just like other boys grow.
 - a. Jesus was like all infants at birth helpless and in need of a mother (Luke 2:6–7, 22; Matthew 2:13–14).
 - b. As He matured He played games with His younger brothers and sisters (Mark 6:3). Certainly, He knew the children in the neighborhood and ran, jumped, climbed and wrestled, etc. with them. Just like boys do (Matthew 11:16–17; 19:14; 21:15).
 - c. It is difficult for some folks to think of Jesus as an ordinary child, but that's exactly what he was! (See: Isaiah 7:14–16; Hebrews 2:17)
2. Jesus “grew” and “increased” in stature (Luke 2:40, 52).
 - a. According to *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance* **αὐξάνω, αὔξω, & ξαίνω** are translated “grow” (12X), “increase” (7X), “give the increase” (2X), “grow up.” The words mean:
 - (1) to cause to grow, augment
 - (2) to increase, become greater
 - (3) to grow, increase
 - b. He did not follow a lifestyle of dissipation and debauchery He matured into a strong, healthy young man (Mark. 6:3; Luke. 2:52).

B. Jesus is an example of obedience to parents—

1. The New Testament says that Jesus was *subject* unto His parents (Luke. 2:52).
 - a. According to *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance* **ὑποτάσσω** is translated as “put under” (6X), “be subject unto” (6X), “be subject to” (5X), “submit (one's) self unto” (5X), “submit (one's) self to” (3X), “be in subjection unto” (2X), put in subjection under. It means:
 - 1) to arrange under, to subordinate
 - 2) to subject, put in subjection
 - 3) to subject oneself, obey
 - 4) to submit to one's control
 - 5) to yield to one's admonition or advice

- 6) to obey, be subject
 - 7) A Greek military term meaning “to arrange [troop divisions] in a military fashion under the command of a leader”. In non-military use, it was “a voluntary attitude of giving in, cooperating, assuming responsibility, and carrying a burden”.
2. It is interesting to note that this statement is made of Jesus at age twelve. When most “authorities” want to attribute rebellion against parental authority to something that is “natural” and to be expected in the teenage years; however, the Bible says that Jesus *subjected Himself* to his parents.
 3. The Lord kept the fifth commandment (Exodus 20:12).
 - a. It is called the first commandment “with promise” (Ephesians 6:2).
 - b. It is the promise of blessing in the land or “on the earth.”
 - c. Israel’s remaining on the land was directly related to their obedience to God (Deuteronomy 29:25–29). Therefore, obedience to one’s parents has something to do with becoming obedient to God (cf., Proverbs 22:15).
 - d. Jesus is the proof of this premise that the discipline and training that comes from obeying one’s parents prepares the heart for obedience to God (John 8:29; Luke 2:52).

C. *Jesus observed the Law & customs of His people—*

1. Often young people want to disregard properly constituted authority and the time honored traditions and customs of the community.
2. Jesus obeyed the law and observed the customs:
 - a. He was circumcised (Luke 2:21).
 - b. He went up to the Temple when required (John 7:14).
 - c. He kept the traditions of the people (Matthew 17:24–27).
 - d. He respected the authority of the government (Matthew 22:21).
3. Men are either respected or despised in a community on account of their regard for what is right and good (Proverbs. 12:8; Luke. 2:52).
 - a. Jesus was held in esteem while He was a young man because He was obedient to parents and law-abiding.

- b. Jesus was not a vandal, a protester, a rebel or a loner. He was respectful of others, their property and their desires.

D. Jesus is an example of the faithful worship of God—

1. Jesus worshipped God from the beginning of His life.
 - a. On the eighth day he was circumcised (Luke 2:21).
 - b. He was presented in the Temple on the 40th day (Luke 2:23; cf., Leviticus 12:2, 3, 8).
 - c. He developed the habit of weekly attendance and participation at the synagogue (Luke 4:16).
 - d. He attended the feasts in Jerusalem from His youth (Luke 2:42).
2. Jesus understood the spiritual implications of worship (Luke 2:49).
 - a. Many attend worship for social, political and cultural reasons (Matthew 6:1–18; 23:5–7).
 - b. However, Jesus recognized His duty to the Father in worship and praise (Luke. 2:49).
 - c. Jesus worshipped in spirit and in truth (John 4:24).
3. The habit of worship is easiest developed in youth (Ecclesiastes 11:9–12:1; Proverbs 22:6,7; Luke 18:21; 1 Timothy 4:12; Acts 26:4; Psalms. 71:5,6).
 - a. The formation of such a habit is directly attributable to the influence of parents (2 Timothy 1:5; cf. 1 Samuel 1:19–29).
 - b. Consider why God chose Mary and Joseph to be the parents of Jesus.

E. Jesus set a proper example for Bible study—

1. Jesus not only grew physically, He grew spiritually (Luke 2:40, 52).
 - a. He was filled with wisdom.
 - b. He increased in wisdom.
 - c. He waxed strong in spirit.
 - d. He increased in favor with God.
2. Spiritual growth comes by study of the Word (1 Peter 2:2).
 - a. Jesus studied (Luke 2:46,47).
 - b. Jesus read the Bible (Luke 4:16).
3. Jesus prioritized His life in order to have time to study.

- a. He learned a trade (Mark 6:3).
- b. However, it did not take precedence over His Bible study.
- c. We need to make the same choice (Matthew 6:33; 2 Timothy 3:15).

F. *Jesus sought heavenly things first—*

1. Jesus wanted what His Father wanted first (Luke 2:46).
2. By learning this lesson early, Jesus prepared His heart to do the difficult things that the Father would require later (Matthew 26:39,42).
3. In youth there is a tendency to indulge ourselves and never learn to do without (Ecclesiastes 11:9, 10).
 - a. When the wants are constantly given and the Father's business is subordinated a terrible habit is started.
 - b. Early in life we need to learn to sacrifice for the Father.

G. *Jesus made a conscious decision not to sin—*

1. Jesus did not sin (1 Peter 2:21, 22; Hebrews 7:26,27).
2. He made this decision in youth (2 Timothy 2:22; Isaiah 7:15,16; Psalms 25:7).
3. We should follow the example of Jesus in deciding not to sin (Daniel 1:8; 1 John 2:1,2; 1 Corinthians 10:13; 15:34; 1 Peter 2:21, 22).

III. CONCLUSION:

- A. *What did Jesus do?***
- B. *Can I do that?***
- C. *Will I do what Jesus did?***

Scriptural Guidelines for Choosing a Mate

I. INTRODUCTION:

A. God Intends that Marriage Be Permanent—

1. God intends for marriage to be a completely fulfilling and permanent relationship: “For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate” (Matthew 19:5, 6).
2. A mate is the single most **crucial and** important decision that one will make, except for becoming a Christian. Therefore, it is not to be taken lightly, nor is one to “set sail” onto the murky waters of marriage without much mature contemplation and prayer to God, and counsel with those of much experience, knowledge, and wisdom.
3. There are legitimate questions one should ask himself and a prospective mate before, long before, “I do” is said in the matrimonial ceremony.

B. Let’s Ask These Questions—

II. DISCUSSION:

A. Does He Believe In God?

1. Regardless of how much they believe in me, do they believe in deity?
 - a. No matter how much I believe in them, do they believe in God, and are they prepared to do the best they can to obey the will of God?
 - b. If not, you will be marrying a fool (Psalm 14:1), and **you** will be marrying someone who cannot please God (Hebrews 11:6).
2. Is this what you want?
 - a. Can you be spiritually stable in such a set of circumstances?
 - b. Can such a mate really give you the genuine spiritual encouragement that you need in such a situation?

B. Has She Been Married Before?

1. Did the previous mate die? If no, did she “put away” her spouse because he committed the sin of fornication?
2. If so, according to the word of the Lord the person may marry again, but if not, or if the person is the one who was divorced because of fornication which he committed, he has no scriptural right to contract another marriage (Matthew 19:9; Mark 10:11-12; Luke 16:18).
3. Young friend, regardless of the emotional attraction you *think* you have for the person, if they have no right to marry you.
4. It is not worth putting your soul **in** eternal peril for the pleasure and happiness you think you will have in this life (Matthew 16:26ff.).

C. Is He a Faithful Member of the Lord’s Church?

1. Just being a member of Jesus’ spiritual body may not be sufficient.
 - a. Is the person faithful? Will he *go* to worship *with* you?
 - b. Not, will he see to it that a way is made available for you to worship, *but will he go by your side?*
 - c. *If not, you will not be marrying a Christian, and this is definitely not the wise thing to do (1 Corinthians 9:5).*
2. A person who is a member of the body of Christ, but not faithful in study, attendance teaching, and living will not be an asset, but a detriment.
 - a. God commands us to “continue growing in grace and knowledge” (2 Peter 3:18).
 - b. Do you *really want or need* someone who cannot assist you in accomplishing your growth in the Lord?

D. Are You Choosing Her as a Mate because She Looks Good, or because She Is Good?

1. One is much better off marrying a person who looks like he has been “run over by a Mack truck,” but is thoughtful, gentle, and godly, than to marry someone who is “regal and stately in appearance,” but who engages in verbal and physical brutality, and has no respect for God, you, and your feelings.
2. Physical beauty will only last as long as “Father Time” is merciful.

- a. Even the most adorable will eventually lose the luster of youth, but the hidden man of the heart, in the incorruptible apparel of a meek and quiet spirit, is in the sight of God of great price" (1 Peter 3:3-6).
- b. Let someone *who loves you for you* without placing too much emphasis on outward, fleeting beauty.

E. How Is He Treating You During the Period of Courtship?

1. Is he attempting to get you to cast aside your virginity for a few moments of sinful sexual pleasure? (Genesis 39)
 - a. Has he attempted to force you into sexual activity? (2 Samuel 13)
 - b. Have you found the person to be completely loyal to you during the courtship, or has he played the field with many women? Has she played with many men? (Consider the Shunnamite in Song of Solomon)
 - c. Does he attempt to engage in petting during dates? (Ezekiel 23, cf. 1 Corinthians 7:1, 2) Does he seek to put his hands in places that are to be kept private until you are married?
2. If so, how can you be sure that he can be trusted after marriage?

F. Is This Person Willing To Have, Lead or Care for a Family?

1. Does he have a mature sense of responsibility?
 - a. Is he qualified to assume the role of a husband, the leader of the family? (Ephesians 5:22-33; Colossians 3:18-21)
 - b. Is he ready to support a family? (Ephesians 4:28; 1 Timothy 5:8; Genesis 2:24; 1 Thessalonians 3:10)
2. Does she understand the profound duty of guiding a house?
 - a. Is she capable of managing a household? (1 Timothy 5:8; Titus 2:5).
 - b. Is she willing to bear and rear children (1 Timothy 2:15).
3. Are both of you ready to leave home and cleave unto one another? (Genesis 2:24; Ephesians 5:31; Matthew 19:5)
 - a. Are you prepared to do with less and share more?
 - b. Will you think of others above yourself? (Philippians 2:3)

III. CONCLUSION:

A. *Marriage Is Only for Those Who Are Prepared—*

1. Spiritually
2. Morally
3. Emotionally
4. Paternally
5. Experientially

B. *Is the Person You Are Considering as a Prospective Spouse Prepared?*

C. *Will You Consider the Consequences of an Improper Choice?*

1. The consequences to your happiness
2. The consequences to your family
3. The consequences to your off-spring
4. The consequences to the church
5. The consequences to your soul

The Importance of Creation

Genesis 1:1

I. INTRODUCTION:

A. *Personal Experiences Which Demonstrate the Failures of Many to Understand the Importance of Creation—*

1. In my sophomore year of high school my biology teacher affirmed her convictions regarding evolution and the Bible. She saw no conflict and was convinced a belief in God did not require a rejection of evolution.
2. In my freshman year of college my wood science professor informed all students that the assumptions of the evolution model of origins were the assumptions of the class. Furthermore, he would not entertain any arguments otherwise; he regarded himself as a theist and found no contradictions between the facts of science and the doctrines of the Bible.
3. Finally, in my senior year of college, I took literature from a woman who advocated that Genesis 1 and 2 were mythical allegories and not to be regarded as statements of historical fact. The point being that Christians should not be so ignorant about their own Bible that they rejected obvious “scientific fact.”
4. Each of the above examples reveal a very popular conviction that it is possible to believe both the Bible and the theory of evolution, that one can be a Christian and deny that God created the heavens and the earth and all that in them is in six literal 24 hour days.

B. *Can We Reject Special Creation and Still Be Christians?*

1. Is creation a central teaching of the Bible? Do the Scriptures require an acceptance of creation as fact in order to be saved? I believe it does, and will show it from the scriptures.
2. Those who advocate otherwise offer various attempts at altering the creation narrative in order to make evolution fit.
 - a. They transform the entire first eleven chapters of Genesis into an allegory, a mythical story, oral tradition and fable.

- b. Others seek to find a gap of time between verses one and two.
- c. Still others will argue that the days were not literal days, but days of indeterminate length and are capable of including long eons of time.
3. It goes without saying each such attempt creates only more problems and embroils one in irreconcilable difficulties with the rest of the Bible.
4. In this lesson study we will show some of the insurmountable consequences of rejecting the creation narrative as actual factual history.

II. DISCUSSION:

A. A Rejection of Creation Is a Rejection of God and His Authority Over Us—

1. The Scriptures assert that the basis of God's authority to rule over all men is the relationship we sustain to Him of creature to Creator (Romans 9:20, 21; Hebrews 3:1-6; Revelation 4:9-11; Nehemiah 9:5-6; Zechariah 12:1)
2. If the relationship of creature/Creator does not exist, then by what right should God expect man to revere Him?

B. A Rejection of Creation Is a Denial of The Power and Majesty Of God—

1. The Scriptures present God to us as omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient, etc. These powers of God are tied directly to the fact that He by fiat created (Psalm 90:2; Hebrews 11:3; Psalm 19:1, 4; 2 Kings 19:15; 1 Chronicles 16:25, 26; Isaiah 40:28-31; Romans 1:18-20).
2. How can I rely upon a "God" who is less in power, intelligence and will than the universe in which He resides? To deny a supernatural cause for the universe is to diminish the God whom we worship.

C. A Rejection of Creation Jeopardizes the Eternal Well Being of Mankind—

1. The Scriptures teach that God is an eternal Spirit who made man in His own image (Genesis 1:26-27; 2:7; Hebrews 12:9; Ecclesiastes 12:7). He is the keeper of souls, and that because He is the Creator (1 Peter 4:19)
2. Now, what hope have we if there is no certainty regarding God's creative power? According to evolution it is not discernible from observing nature (Romans 1:18-20; Psalm 19:1, 4).
3. What reason is there to believe that we even have a soul if God did not create man as the Bible teaches?

D. A Rejection of Creation Is A Denial of the Gospel—

1. When the gospel was preached men were called upon to believe in a God who created (Acts 14:15; 17:23-27; John 1:1-3, 10; Hebrews 1: 2-10; Colossians 1:13-17)
2. When men deny a special Creation they deny that God planned and executed redemption (Ephesians 1:3, 4).
3. Furthermore, to deny creation casts reflection on Christ (Matthew 19:4-6) and the Scriptures (Isaiah 44:24)
4. If there is no creation, there is no foundation upon which to predicate the gospel plan of salvation.

E. A Rejection of Creation Is a Refusal to Accept the Inevitability of a Day of Judgment—

1. The Scriptures teach that the God who created is the God who will destroy in judgment (2 Peter 3:1-10; Colossians 1:17; Hebrews 1:10-12)
2. Yet, if all things exist by natural causes, all things can only cease to exist by natural causes. What reason is there to believe that heaven and earth will ever pass away?
3. Of course, the consequence is what we see: “Many scoffers ...”

III. CONCLUSION:

A. Evolution Theory and Christianity are Incompatible—

1. You cannot believe the Bible, trust God, accept Christ, live right or worship God and hold to any theory of evolution.
2. The two are wholly incompatible—you cannot be a rational thinker and accept both—they cannot be harmonized.

B. The Promoters of Evolution Theory Intend to Weaken Faith—

1. It has its origins among the godless and unbelieving.
2. It has been accepted by those who think more of the world and what it has to offer than they think of Christ and His church.
3. It is promoted and presented as plausible in order to align the church with the world rather than turning the world to Christ the eternal Creator.

Our Clothes Send a Message

I Timothy 2:9

I. INTRODUCTION:

A. The Text In Context -

1. Paul writes Timothy concerning how believers ought to behave themselves in the local church fellowship (1 Timothy 3:15).
2. The instructions Paul gives concerns a wide variety of subjects:
 - a. Reproof of false teacher (1:3-ff)
 - b. prayers (2:1-7)
 - c. a chaste life [including clothing] (2:8ff)
 - d. the eldership (3:1-7)
 - e. the deaconate (3:8-14)
 - f. asceticism (4:1-11)
 - g. personal piety (4:12-16)
 - h. relationships (5:1-2)
 - i. the care of widows (5:3-16)
 - j. servant/master relations (6:1-2)
 - k. money (6:6-19)
3. The instruction concerning proper dress appears in this context --

B. The Text Analyzed --

1. Meta -
 - a. *Thayer*, "a preposition ... denoting association, union accomplishment with the genitive ... 2. of association and companionship with ... f. with the genitive of mental feelings, desires and emotions, of bodily movements, and other acts which are so to speak the attendants of what is done or occurs; so that in this way the characteristic of the action or occurrence is described—which in most cases can be expressed by a cognate adverb or participle: *meta aidous* 1 Timothy 2:9" (pp. 403-404).

- b. *Nicoll*, “with shamefastness and self control or discreetness: the inward characteristic, and **the external indication or evidence of it.**” (p. 108).
 - c. *BADG*, “III. to denote the attendant circumstances of something that takes place. 1. of moods, emotions, wishes, feelings, excitement, states of mind or body ... with modesty 1 Tim. 2:9 ...” (p. 509).
2. “modest apparel”
- a. Literally, “adorn themselves in adorning attire -- “
 - b. The word as translated gets its significance from the attributes of the inner man—shamefast and sober.
 - 1) “becoming apparel” (ABUV)
 - 2) “in seemly attire” (Rhm)
 - 3) “in becoming attire” (Bev)
 - 4) “suitable apparel” (Mon)
 - 5) “seemly apparel” (Con)
 - 6) “in proper clothes (Bepd)

C. The Text applied—

- 1. Paul affirms that dress is an expression of the heart, the inner man, the spirit (2:9)
 - a. The heart is an essential element in our worship (John 4:24)
 - b. The condition of our heart affects our worship (Matthew 15:8)
 - c. Those who dress immodestly run the risk of making their worship vain (Matthew 15:9).
- 2. Paul affirms that proper attire is a good work that becomes the Christian (2:19).
 - a. Christians are to maintain good works (Titus 3:8, 14)
 - b. Our works will be considered in the judgment (2 Corinthians 5:10)
- 3. Paul concludes that what we wear says more about us than what we say ourselves (2:8, 10).
 - a. The old adage, “Actions speaks louder than words.”
 - b. For example: The young lady the other evening at the Western Sizzlin’ (about 18, a short shirt and a bare midriff, wanting to join in our “religious” conversation because she was a student in our area Christian college).
 - c. Is your confession being obscured by your conversation? (1 Peter 3:1)

II. DISCUSSION:

A. *There is clothing which communicates reverence—*

1. Joseph (Genesis 41:41)
 - a. He wanted to appeal to Pharaoh in order that he might be released. He wanted his favor.
 - b. Compare to being invited to the Whitehouse.
 - c. This is not ostentation, hypocrisy, or appeal to vanity. It is reverence for authority and power. Is God worthy of less?
2. Peter (John 21:7)
 - a. Why would Peter go to the trouble of putting on this “ependutes”, i.e. the outer garment?
 - b. He was “naked”, *gumnos* or nude (absolute or relative). His appearance was inappropriate for greeting the Lord.
 - c. The term “naked” is used to indicate those who are improperly clad (Revelation 3:17).
3. The ill-clad man at the Wedding Feast (Matthew 22:11, 12)
 - a. Yes, this is a parable. However, that which is a figure must be true in order for the spiritual lesson to be true.
 - b. This man demonstrated a lack of respect for the groom and bride by coming to the feast inappropriately dressed.
 - c. Therefore, recognize that certain clothing is appropriate for different situations. Every society knows this, even America!
4. There is just some clothing that is altogether inappropriate for worship because it communicates a lack of reverence for the Almighty and the Son of God.
 - a. *Tee Shirts* with advertisements and slogans, not necessarily, vulgar, but only suitable for ball games and working in the yard.
 - b. *Casual wear* (blue jeans, T-shirts, slacks and gym clothes) reflect a spirit that is hardly impressed with the gravity of coming into the presence of the throne room of heaven (cf. Revelation 4:2-6, 8-11).

B. *There is clothing which communicates a materialistic mind—*

1. The Rich Man (Luke 16:19)

- a. The rich man expressed his materialism through an opulent and lavish lifestyle that included his clothing.
 - b. Purple was the signature of wealthy and powerful men (Mark 15:17, 20; John 19:2, 5; Acts 16:14; Revelation 17:4; 18:12, 16; Judges 8:26; Esther 1:6; 8:15; Proverbs 31:22).
 - c. The rich man concerned himself with his appearance above the weightier matters of life—Lazarus and his suffering.
2. The Man in gay clothing (Js. 2:2-4)
 - a. Definitions:
 - 1) goodly - radiant, magnificent, gorgeous, or sumptuous
 - 2) gay - same Greek word as above
 - 3) vile - dirty, i.e., relatively cheap or shabby
 - b. This man's clothing reflected his wealth and his emphasis on material things.
 - c. Christians should not, even though they can easily afford it, display their wealth in such a way.
 - d. The assemblies are no place for a fashion show or "Easter parade".
 3. The Holy Woman of 1 Peter 3:3
 - a. What is prohibited?
 - 1) "the plating of hair"—a custom of ancient times that was both costly and expensive.
 - 2) "putting on of apparel"—the appeal to her husband is by the alluring use of clothing instead of the appeal of a chaste conversation.
 - b. Here and in the circumstances above such ostentation reflects that one is preoccupied with a measure of himself by things (Luke 12:15).
 4. This form of vanity is particularly unbecoming in men and women professing godliness.
 - a. Preachers who are bedecked with enough "tinsel" to decorate a X-mas tree.
 - b. Churches whose reputation is that of a "rich church" (Revelation 3:17, 18).
 - c. Better that we do as Dorcas (Acts 9:36-39)

C. There is clothing which communicates wantonness and sensuality—

1. The Woman of Proverbs 7:10

- a. She had on “the attire of an harlot”, but she was not a harlot (7:19).
 - b. Tamar put on the clothes of a prostitute to deceive Judah (Genesis 38:14, 15)
 - c. These women were thought to be wanton because of how they dressed.
2. The Great Whore (Revelation 17:1-4)
- a. The “great whore” is shown by how she dressed.
 - b. What imagery comes to your mind when you read these words?
 - c. You know there is such clothing.
3. The Levites Special Clothing (Exodus 28:42)
- a. The worship of the pagan was commonly associated with lasciviousness and fornication (cf. Exodus 32:25)
 - b. God did not want his priests dressing in a way that would give rise to this sin.
 - c. Lesson: God is concerned that worship be pure, free from the corruption that is in the world through lust (2 Peter 11:4).
4. Adam and Eve Were Naked (Genesis 3:7-11)
- a. Our first parents in their innocence were nude in the garden (Genesis 2:25)
 - b. However, sin came and shame was in their hearts and their nakedness was now a matter about which to be concerned (cf. to young children)
 - c. When they made their “aprons” they were still naked (3:10). God agreed with them (3:11).
 - d. God covered their nakedness with “coats”, a garment covering the shoulders to about the knees (3:21).
5. Too many Christians wear clothing that, like Adam’s apron, leaves them naked.
- a. The swimsuits, the shorts, the miniskirts are all clothing that exposes the thighs.
 - b. Tight fitting and sheer blouses reveal the bosom, as do low cut necklines.
 - c. While some are covered (barely) standing up, they are naked when they sit down (Brother Lafayette Pounds used to say, “She is poked down too far in her frock.”)
 - d. We are seeing this kind of dress among the members here even in the assemblies.
 - e. Who must we admonish?
 - 1) Husbands—you are the head (Ephesians 5:23).

- 2) Fathers—you are the disciplinarian (Ephesians 6:4)
- 3) Mothers—you are the accountable teachers (Titus 2:5, 6)
- 4) Grandparents—you are still an influence (Titus 2:3, 4)
- 5) Young people—you have influence too (1 Timothy 4:12-16)

III. CONCLUSION:

A. *Our clothes send a message!*

B. *What message are you sending?*

1. "I reverence God in al things."
2. "My life consists of the things which I possess"
3. "I am chaste, sober and discreet."

C. *Will you think on these things?*

You Reap What You Sow!

Galatians 6:7,8

I. INTRODUCTION:

A. *Jesus Taught Truth from Agricultural Examples:*

1. The Parable of the Sower to represent the Gospel of salvation (Matthew 13).
2. The Kingdom compared to a vine (John 15) or a flock of sheep (John 10).
3. The resurrection likened unto sowing seed (1 Corinthians 15:36).
4. The final judgment is compared separating sheep and goats (Matthew 25).
5. Living in sin is compared to a hog wallow (Luke 15).
6. Apostates are compared to field of nettles (Hebrews 6)
7. Reprobates are likened to dogs in spirituality (Matthew 7).

B. *The Law of the Harvest Used to Teach that Every Act has Its Consequences.*

1. The lesson we will learn today is one of the simplest and most obvious, but one which is rarely learned until it is too late.
2. Most folks seem to think that we can stroll through life, living however we choose, never to be held accountable for the choices we make.
3. However, sooner or later (hopefully sooner) the law of the harvest catches up with us.

II. DISCUSSION:

A. *The Infallible Law of the Harvest: “Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap.”*

1. This is the infallible rule in the natural realm (Genesis 1:11,12; 3:17–19; Genesis 8:21; Matthew 13:24–30).
2. It is the infallible rule in the spiritual realm (Galatians 6:7,8; Proverbs 22:8; 2 Corinthians 9:6; Hosea 8:5; 10:12,13; 1 Corinthians 15:36–44).
3. Three things are certain from the “Law of the Harvest”—
 - a. You reap only what you sow (Matthew 13:23).
 - b. You reap only when you sow (1 Corinthians 15:36).
 - c. You reap more than you sow (Hosea 8:5).

B. All of Us Are Sowing unto the Great Harvest—

1. We are sowing in the “field” of Family relations:
 - a. Fathers (Ephesians 6:1–4; Titus 1:6; Colossians 3:21)
 - b. Mothers (Titus 2:4; 1 Timothy 5:5–8)
 - c. Husbands (Ephesians 5:25; Colossians 3:19)
 - d. Wives (Ephesians 5:24; 1 Peter 3:7; Ephesians 5:29)
 - e. Children (Ephesians 6:4; Proverbs 3:1–3)
2. We are sowing in the “field” of Human relations:
 - a. Neighbors (Romans 12:18; Matthew 5:38–42)
 - b. Friends (Proverbs 18:24; Proverbs 17:9,17; 25:17)
 - c. Employers/Employees (Ephesians 6:5–9; Proverbs 29:21; James 5:4)
 - d. Civil Government (Romans 13:1–8)
 - e. Enemies (Romans 12:19–21; Matthew 5:25,26)
3. We are sowing in the “field” of Spiritual relations:
 - a. Bible Study (Hebrews 5:12–14; 6:7,8)
 - b. Overcoming sin (Hebrews 12:4–11)
 - c. Liberality (2 Corinthians 9:6–10)
 - d. Service (Luke 6:27–38)
 - e. Worship (Matthew 6:1–18)

C. “Be Not Deceived”

1. Some sow their “wild oats” and pray for a crop failure.
 - a. You will reap what you sow!
 - b. Those that are sowing to the wind will reap the whirlwind (Hosea 8:5).
2. Some reap in real time— (Psalm 37; Acts 12:21–23)
3. Some will reap in eternity— (Psalm 73; cf. Luke 16)

III. CONCLUSION:

A. There Is a Spiritual Law of the Harvest

B. All Men Are Subject to that Law

C. What Are You Sowing Today, that You will Reap Tomorrow?

When I Am Tempted...

I. INTRODUCTION:

A. "I am tempted..."

1. Our flesh is the great battleground in which we war against the Tempter (Ephesians 6:10–17; 2 Corinthians 10:3–5).
 - a. Satan appeals to us along one of three avenues of temptation (1 John 2:16).
 - (1) "The lust of the eyes"
 - (2) "The lust of the flesh"
 - (3) "The pride of life"
 - b. This is always his approach.
 - (1) This is how he came at Eve (Genesis 3:1–6).
 - (2) This is how he came at David (2 Samuel 11:1–17).
 - (3) This is how he came at Jesus (Matthew 4:1–11).
2. All men are engaged in this war in the flesh (James 1:14).
 - a. There are none who are not tempted (1 Corinthians 10:13).
 - b. Furthermore, there are none who have not been severely wounded in the engagement (Romans 3:23; Ecclesiastes 7:20).
 - c. Spiritual death was the result of yielding to temptation (Romans 8:5,6; James 1:15; Ezekiel 18:4,20; 1 Timothy 5:6).
 - d. Thereby we are in need of a Saviour (Romans 7:5, 9, 14-17, 24-25).
3. This conflict does not end when we are redeemed (James 1:2, 12, 13).
 - a. The Christian is severely tried by Satan (1 Peter 5:1-8).
 - b. Jesus was a righteous man and tempted (1 Peter 1:22).

B. How Do I Resist Temptation?

1. While all are tempted, it need not result in sin (James 1:15; 1 Jno. 3:4; 1 John 2:1, 16–17; 1 Corinthians 10:12).
 - a. There is a way of escaping temptation (1 Corinthians 10:13).
 - b. Jesus commands us to resist it and sin not (1 John 2:1; 1 Corinthians 15:34).
2. What we want to learn is how to resist temptation and sin not (1 John 2:1).
 - a. I believe some have given into the notion that sin is inevitable in our lives.

- b. I am not saying that we will be perfect, that is, sinless (1 John 1:8,10).
- c. But, I am saying that we do not have to give into temptation—that we can stop the pattern of returning to sin.

II. DISCUSSION:

A. I Remember That The Devil Can Be Resisted—

1. The devil is not an evil “God.”
 - a. He is not omniscient.
 - b. He is not omnipresent.
 - c. He is not omnipotent.
 - d. He is not eternal.
2. The Devil can be resisted (James 4:7; Ephesians 4:27, 6:11; 1 Peter 5:8, 9).
3. His devices are not a secret (2 Corinthians 2:11; 11:13-15).

B. I Remember That I Am a Man Created in the Image of God—

1. Genesis 1:26, that likeness is in the inner man.
2. What does this imply?
 - a. Intellect or reason
 - b. Will or choice
 - c. Morality, the knowledge right and wrong
3. My nature is not corrupt (Ecclesiastes 7:29; 1 John 2:1; 1 Corinthians 15:34).
4. God’s will is not beyond my ability to do it
 - a. We can understand it (Ephesians 3:4; 5:17; John 7:17).
 - b. We can do it (1 John 5:3).
 - c. The issue is do we will it (John 7:17).

C. I Recall Scriptures Related to the Particular Temptation—

1. The example of Jesus (Matthew 4:4, 7, 10).
 - a. Jesus is my example in temptation (1 Peter 2:21,22; 1 John 2:6).
 - b. His methods are tried and proven successful (1 Peter 2:22 Hebrews 4:15).
2. The secret to this success is Bible study (Psalms 119:11).
 - a. Bible study eliminates ignorance (John 8:32).
 - b. Bible study gains for us wisdom (Proverbs 1:1–4).
 - c. Bible study builds character (Hebrews 4:12).

3. Scripture related to common temptations.
 - a. Make a list of verses that apply to your besetting sin and commit them to memory.
 - b. Make a purposeful application of those verses in your daily experience.

D. I Reflect Upon the Offering of Jesus—

1. I remember Him at the last supper (John 13:1–38; Matthew 26:20–35).
2. I remember Him in Gethsemane (Matthew 26:36–56; Mark 14:32–50).
3. I remember Him on trial (Matthew 26:57–68; Mark 15:1ff; Luke 23:6–12).
4. I remember him on the cross (Matthew 27:32–38; Mark 15:21–41; Luke 23:33–38).

E. I Pray for Deliverance—

1. When Jesus was tempted Jesus prayed (Luke 6:11, 12; Matthew 26:36–44).
2. Jesus taught us to pray for deliverance (Matthew 6:13).
3. God will answer these prayers (1 Corinthians 10:13; James 1:13).

F. I Re-evaluate My Pattern of Life—

1. Temptations often come because we are not circumspect.
 - a. We are with the wrong people (Proverbs 1:10).
 - b. We are watching the wrong things (Job 31:1).
 - c. We have our priorities out of order (Matthew 6:33).
 - d. We are not where we should be (2 Samuel 11:2).
2. Jesus taught us to watch and pray.
 - a. Some start praying after they have run up and embraced temptation.
 - b. Bible examples of watchfulness:
 - (1) Joseph fled (Genesis 39:12).
 - (2) Timothy was told to flee (2 Timothy 2:22).
 - (3) The Corinthians admonished also (1 Corinthians 6:18).
 - (4) The Romans admonished also (Romans 13:14).
3. Much of our trouble comes because we do not learn to break off the associations, activities and entertainments that give rise to temptation.

III. CONCLUSION:

A. *Temptation Is the Common Experience of Man—*

1. It need not result in sin
2. But, we must face it and resist it.

B. *How to Do This?*

1. I remember that the devil can be resisted.
2. I remember that I am a man created in the image of God.
3. I recall scriptures related to the particular temptation.
4. I reflect on the suffering of Jesus.
5. I pray for deliverance.
6. I re-evaluate my pattern of life.

“Faithful in That Which Is Least”

Luke 16:10

I. INTRODUCTION:

A. *The Parable of the Unjust Steward*—

1. A difficult parable to understand. Why?
 - a. Jesus seemingly gives a commendation of what is obviously dishonest (16:8).
 - b. However, if we remember that this is a comparison and not positive instruction the difficulty will disappear.
 - c. Jesus does not commend theft, but a wise use of material things.
2. Jesus makes three applications of the actions of the Unjust Steward:
 - a. First, Jesus “in character” commends the steward’s actions from the standpoint of a “man of the world” (16:8a). This sets the parable up for the spiritual application.
 - b. Next, Jesus makes the broader spiritual application, “Use your material possessions to provide yourself not a temporal habitation, but an eternal habitation.” Jesus wants us to be wiser than the world (16:8b).
 - c. Finally, Jesus makes a sub-application of the former by instructing us with respect to the proper use of material things. We have a stewardship of which we must give an account. How we have handled this stewardship will determine whether or not we are given our own things—the heavenly treasure (cf. Matthew 6:19–24).

B. *Our Lesson Study Is Built Around the Third Application*—

1. I believe that there is an eternal principle of truth contained in these words that have application to every facet of the human experience—ultimately affecting our eternal destiny.
2. “He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much” applies to (1) our jobs, (2) our homes, (3) our friendships, (4) the Church and (5) eternity.
3. In this study let’s consider the application of the principle.

II. DISCUSSION:

A. Are You Faithful in that Which Is Least on the Job?

1. The Bible has some plain instruction concerning a proper work ethic.
 - a. Man was created to work (Genesis 2:15; Ecclesiastes 5:12).
 - b. Without work, men would become idle and troublemakers (Matthew 20:1–15; 1 Thessalonians 4:11; 2 Thessalonians 3:11; 1 Timothy 5:13; Ezekiel 16:49).
 - c. Work establishes the ethical basis for property ownership (Ephesians 4:28; 2 Thessalonians 3:12; 1 Thessalonians 4:12).
 - d. When another man's servant, it is required that we be faithful (1 Corinthians 4:2; Ephesians 6:5–8; Colossians 3:22–25; Titus 2:9,10).
 - e. God expects us to earn our wage (Job 7:1,2; 14:1; Matthew 20).
 - f. He expects us to be satisfied with our wages (Matthew 20:12; Luke 3:14).
2. Do you want to advance on your job? Do you want to get a raise?
 - a. You cannot be like the Unjust Steward (Luke 16:3). Start on the bottom and work your way up!
 - b. Are you trustworthy in the small responsibilities you have? Do you steal?
 - c. Do you give a "full day's work" for your pay? On the other hand, are you like the "hireling" looking for "quittin' time"?
 - d. Are you a contented and satisfied employee? Do you grouse with the rest of them? Are you rendering service or eye-service?

B. Are You Faithful in that Which Is Least at Home?

1. Young people need to learn this principle in their relation with their parents.
 - a. Young people often want to have their parents "trust" them and give them additional privileges (e.g., a car, extended curfews, choice of entertainments, unchaperoned activities, etc.).
 - b. What do you suppose is the basis for establishing trust in a person? That's right, faithfulness in that which is least.
2. Are you building or destroying trust between you and your parents?
 - a. Do you lie to your parents? (Proverbs 14:5)
 - b. Are you obedient to their rules? (Jeremiah 21:22; cf. Ephesians 6:1)
 - c. Are you diligent to cooperate in their desires? (Galatians 4:1,2)

3. These are the things that will constitute a man a “wise son” in whom a father can trust (Proverbs 10:1; 15:20; 19:13; 27:11; 29:3).

C. Are You Faithful in that Which Is Least in Your Relationships?

1. The Bible tells us that friendships are built by faithfulness in small things.
 - a. Friends are careful to keep confidences (Proverbs 17:9; 11:13).
 - b. Friends are not fickle (Proverbs 17:17; 25:17; 27:10).
 - c. Friends are truthful (Proverbs 27:6,9,17,19).
 - d. Friends stick with you in trouble (Proverbs 17:17; Job 6:14; Psalm 41:9).
 - e. Friends are forgiving (Proverbs 17:9).
2. Do you wonder why you do not have any friends?
 - a. “A man that hath friends must show himself friendly” (Proverbs 18:24).
 - b. Friendships require mutual trust (Ecclesiastes 4:9–12).
 - c. Are you the kind of man or woman with which others will “walk through the fire” (Daniel 3:21).

D. Are You Faithful in that Which Is Least in the Church?

1. The Church is a place where faithfulness in that which is least is important.
 - a. Elders (1 Timothy 3:1ff)
 - b. Deacons (1 Timothy 3:10)
 - c. Servants (2 Corinthians 8:22; Acts 15:38)
 - d. Saints (2 Corinthians 2:9; 8:8,24; 13:5; Galatians 6:3,4)
 - e. Evangelists (Philippians 2:22; 2 Timothy 4:5)
2. Many never learn the importance of small things.
 - a. Our attendance (Hebrews 10:25).
 - b. Our giving (2 Corinthians 9:6,7).
 - c. Our random acts of kindness (Colossians 3:12–14).
3. Greatness comes through the small things (Matthew 18:4; 23:11,12).
 - a. Many wonder why the Church does not promote them to a place of responsibility and duty.
 - b. It is because they have not been faithful in the small things.
 - c. What are you doing with the opportunities you have today to prove your fitness for service? Are you squandering them by your faithlessness?

III. CONCLUSION:

A. Faithfulness in that Which Is Least Determines Eternity's Outcome—

1. Jesus cast aside the One Talent Man?
 - a. He did not do what he was able and obligated to do (Matthew 25:30).
 - b. The Five Talent Man and the Two Talent Man were faithful over a few things that were not theirs. After that, the Lord gave them their own cities to rule.
 - c. Jesus will give us eternal treasure for our own after we complete our stewardship to him (Luke 16:11,12).
2. It may not seem important what we do in the kingdom.
 - a. We are tempted to be slack in our duties.
 - b. We are careless in the way we handle ourselves.
 - c. We manage to shove something in front of Christ and His church.
 - d. We cheat our Master and tell his competitors to take more than their share.

B. Have You Been Faithful in that Which Is Least?

1. Have you been a faithful ...
 - a. Worker
 - b. Child
 - c. Friend
 - d. Member of the local Church
2. If not, then now is the time to be begin; it's not too late.

Back to School

I. INTRODUCTION:

A. Every Year at This Time We Get Our “Back To School” Checklist—

1. No. 2 Pencils
2. Three–ring Binder
3. Black or blue ink pens
4. Spiral bound notebooks
5. Glue sticks
6. Scissors
7. Wide ruled paper
8. Doctor’s notes on prescriptions
9. Gym clothes
10. Book bag

B. However, Everything You Need at School Is Not On the List—

1. School is not what it used to be.
 - a. The biggest problem we had in school when I was going was the boys smoking in the bathrooms.
 - b. That was considered major compared to the problems of a generation or two before, chewing gum and being tardy.
 - c. Young people today face some very serious challenges in the classroom and on the school grounds: drugs, alcohol, lying, fornication, gangs, etc.
2. What you need to meet these challenges you are not going to buy at the Wal-Mart or the Dollar General. Neither the school board nor the teachers are going to provide what you need.
3. What every person needs to meet the challenges of going back to school, whether a student, a parent, a teacher or an administrator is to be found in the pages of God’s book.

C. In This Study We Will Consider Some Things You Must Take Back to School in This Coming Year—

II. DISCUSSION:

A. When You Go Back To School Carry Honesty with You—

1. What is honesty?
 - a. “The quality or condition of being honest.”
 - b. “The quality or truthfulness and probity, combined with overall moral excellence.”
 - c. “Integrity and straightforwardness in conduct, thought and speech; free from fraud.”
 - d. Sincerity, truthfulness
 - e. *Syns.*: honesty, incorruptibility, incorruptibleness, integrity, rectitude, uprightness.
2. The Word of God says:
 - a. **Romans 12:17**, “Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.”
 - b. **2 Corinthians 13:7**, “Now I pray to God that ye do no evil; not that we should appear approved, but that ye should do that which is honest, though we be as reprobates.”
 - c. **1 Peter 2:12**, “Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.”
3. With whom should you be honest?
 - a. Be honest with God and His Word. You cannot fool God, or hide from God, or disregard His word with impunity (Galatians 6:7-8; Numbers 32:23; John 12:48).
 - b. Be honest with yourself. Some chimney corner scripture says, “*To thine ownself be true and thou canst not be false to any.*” You have a conscience and while it is not a perfect guide, God gave it to you to warn when you stray from what He has taught you in His word (John 8:9; Acts 24:16; Romans 2:15; 1 Timothy 4:2; Hebrews 13:18; 1 Peter 3:16).
 - c. Be honest with your fellow students. Lying and cheating is the best way to ruin friendships and destroy trust (1 Peter 3:10; Proverbs 11:9).

- d. Be honest with your teachers. Your teachers are there to help you and instruct you. If you are a cheater or a liar you undermine the implicit trust which exists between student and instructor (Proverbs 25:17; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12), and you hurt yourself in the long run (Proverbs 20:17).
- e. Be honest with your parents. Your parents are on your side and they want to help you through the difficult times (Psalms 103:13). However, dishonesty can ruin a good relationship between parents and children (Proverbs 27:11). The surest way to avoid this pitfall is always obey your parents (Ephesians 6:1).

B. When You Go Back to School Carry Respect for Authority With You—

1. Teachers are in a position of authority over students and are to be respected and obeyed.
 - a. They are in authority over you because your parents have given you into their care (Galatians 4:1,2; Ephesians 6:1).
 - b. They are in authority over you because they are the agents of the state (Romans 13:1,2).
 - c. They are in authority over you because they are adults (Leviticus 19:32).
2. *Everyone of us is under some authority, and always will be under some authority.* We cannot live a peaceable prosperous life without learning respect for and submitting to authority (Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-19).
 - a. Turmoil in the home because a lack of respect for authority.
 - b. Turmoil in the schools because of a lack of respect for authority.
 - c. Turmoil on the job because of a lack of respect for authority.
 - d. Turmoil in society because of a lack of respect for authority.
3. The importance of learning respect for authority is demonstrated by the Centurion who came to Jesus in Matthew 8:5-10.
 - a. Without respect for parents there will be no respect for teachers.
 - b. Without respect for teachers there will be no respect for law officers and civil government.
 - c. Without respect of government there will be no respect for God.

C. When You Go Back To School Carry Moral Courage with You—

1. What is moral courage?
 - a. “That quality of mind which enables one to meet danger and difficulties with firmness.”
 - b. Moral courage exemplified in Daniel, Mishael, Hananiah and Azariah (Daniel 1, 3, 6).
 - c. Moral courage exemplified in Joseph (Genesis 39:7, 8).
2. Why the need for moral courage at school?
 - a. The public schools belong to the people, both good and bad. Thus, both good and bad have an influence in the schools.
 - b. The government cannot and, sometimes will not, legislate against all that is sinful.
 - c. Therefore, you will have to be brave and resist those influences that come your way that would lead you into sin.
3. Challenges to be faced with moral courage:
 - a. Modesty (1 Timothy 2:9,10; 1 Peter 3:1-6; Proverbs 2:10)
 - b. Alcohol and drugs (1 Peter 4:1-4; Proverbs 23:29-35)
 - c. The dance (Galatians 5:21)
 - d. Gangs (Proverbs 1:10-19)
 - e. Evolution and humanism (Psalms 14:1; Romans 1:20)
 - f. Sex education (Matthew 19:1-12; Genesis 2:24,25; 1 Corinthians 7:1-5)

III. CONCLUSION:

A. Yes, there are things which we definitely need to take with us back to school:

1. Honesty
2. Respect for authority
3. Moral courage

B. Where we going to find these things?

1. We will find them in God’s word (2 Timothy 3:16, 17)
2. We must find them in the training and discipline of the home (Proverbs 22:6)
3. We must have them in our hearts before we can put it into practice at school (Psalms 119:11).