

1. By Every Word:

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“Man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live.” Deuteronomy 8:3. The Word of God is associated with the bread of life. But what else is the Word compared to?

1 Peter 2:1, 2. Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, 2 As newborn babes, desire **the sincere milk of the word**, that ye may grow thereby:

We need to realize that the sincere milk of the word has its place in our lives and we need to be able to provide it in a clear and thorough way to the lambs of the flock. There are different kinds of lamb—certainly the children need to be lovingly guided into a true understanding of the way of salvation, and also those who have had no foundation in Christianity, need to hear the story of salvation from the lips of one who Knows the Lord. This sincere milk is precious and not to be despised as unimportant.

Now we know there is a Difference between milk and milkshakes.

2 Timothy 4:3. “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;”

We know that there are all too many who wish to have smooth things and entertainment spoken to them but this is in no way to be confused with the sincere milk of the Word of God. We should not look down on the simple foundational truths of salvation, especially if we have the young or the unconverted among us in our homes. I would say unto one and all: **Don’t starve the lambs!**

1 Corinthians 3:2. “I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.”

Now, while it may be a fact that the people Paul was speaking to, SHOULD have been further along in their growth and were not putting forth the effort to learn on their own, but it still shows that we need to be able to serve the sincere milk, when that is what is needed. This is especially true in our families.

Genesis 33:13, 14. “And he said unto him, My lord knoweth that the children are tender, and the flocks and herds with young are with me: and if men should overdrive them one day, all the flock will die. 14 Let my lord, I pray thee, pass over before his servant: and I will lead on softly, according as the cattle that goeth before me and **the children be able to endure**, until I come unto my lord unto Seir.”

We can suppose that our children do understand the deeper prophecies, but we need to make sure that they also have a foundational understanding in the basics of salvation, and are led into a personal relationship with Jesus appropriate for their age.

There have been many who left the truth as soon as they were able, and the reason was that their childhood had been so filled with fear because of hearing the preaching of the 7 last plagues and what was going to happen when Turkey fell, and so on. Fear can be a real factor in children as they hear these prophecies discussed; especially if no one has guided them into the loving relationship with Jesus they need to find refuge in. Don’t assume this is not a factor in your home just because your children don’t speak of it—children will often hide these things in their hearts.

This is the testimony of the late Glenn Coon of his experience in childhood fear.

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"I was reared in a Seventh-day Adventist home. At the tender age of six, my mother told me the story of Jesus. In her simple, humble manner she told me of His birth and His life. She shared with me how He healed the sick and brought joy to the unhappy, and finally gave His life for me that I might have eternal life. The story was so touching that I fell in love with Him. I said, "Mother, what shall I do?" She suggested that we do what I John 1:9 says to do: to confess our sins and believe that He will cleanse us from every stain that the sin has left.

"We knelt down in my little bedroom in that old farmhouse, and there beside my mother I prayed and asked Jesus to forgive my sins. I believe that He did; I believed it then without question. I knew that I had become His child. I had fallen in love with Jesus. It was such a happy experience!

"It was a joy to go to church and realize that the One that loved me was there. But something very unfortunate happened to me. For I backslid right in our little home church.

"You ask why. I John 4:18 tells me: "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love."

"I heard a sermon in church about the seven plagues that were to come upon the world and we had better watch out or one of them would up and catch us! I heard about a time of trouble that was to burst in upon the world the like of which we had never known, and we were liable to be swept away by it. They told, too, about Turkey being driven out of Europe and if we didn't watch out, we might be driven out with it! Oh, the fears and chills and tremors I experienced! My spine fairly tingled with fear as I sat there! How scared I became, thinking about all of the terrible things that I had to look forward to.

"If there was any love that had come in by my acquaintance with Jesus, that love was driven out by an avalanche of fear. You see, love and fear cannot dwell in the heart at the same time. When one comes in, the other must take leave. In my case, fear took the place of love and I simply backslid. How often this happens. Time and time again, people start on the way to the Kingdom full of love and joy, enjoying an experience with the Lord - happy to be a part of the wonderful Advent family, when all of a sudden their entire experience is shattered because fear is injected into the heart.

"A young lady once came up to me and told me that she had had the very same experience. "In fact," she said, "I became so worried and fearful that I finally decided I would quit going to church. And even after I quit going to church, I would go out of my way not to have to go past the church, because I equated the church with this terrible fear I had. I didn't want to be anywhere near the church."

"I believe there is something wrong with preaching of that kind, don't you? It is hardly consistent with a loving God to have His ministry present a message that will instill that kind of fear. The Bible tells us that we fall in love with Jesus because He is a Lover, and since the Bible says that fear has torment, I say that these dear people who read from the Bible one thing to the neglect of something just as vital misrepresented God and failed to give a clear, complete picture.

"The Bible does picture for us some rather dismal days ahead; it does describe the seven last plagues in rather graphic language. It will be terrible. But, there is something else! God emphasizes the fact that in the midst of all of this, His people are going to be protected and cared for. God promises to look after His own during these terrible days of conflict. It was the absence of these verses of scripture that put the fear into my young heart and made me back-slide; it was the incomplete picture - the exclusion of God's protection that turned the young lady away from the church. It is the absence of these vital facts of God's love that is driving many away from the church!"

Fear hath torment—God does not want His children to serve Him from fear or run from Him in fear. Often blessed relief is found in a cup of the warm milk of the Word. "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." 2 Timothy 1:7

7 Bible Secrets of child raising;

1. "Train up".

Proverbs 22:6 "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it."

Training takes time, patience, persistence, Consistency and effort!

2 Timothy 3:15 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

Genesis 18:19 For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.

Proverbs 19:18 Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying.

Avoid compromise; never break a health rule or any Christian standard and call it a treat! Consistency is SO vital:

James 1:8 A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.

2. "Upon the door posts"

Teach by precept and example in all parts of daily living.

Deuteronomy 11:18-21. Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes. 19 And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. 20 And thou shalt write them upon the door posts of thine house, and upon thy gates: 21 That your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children, in the land which the LORD sware unto your fathers to give them, as the days of heaven upon the earth.

What do you have on your walls? Ten commandment charts and sweet verses and mottos can have a lasting effect on those that see them day by day.

Children will copy the parent's doings more than what the parents say. They are all too quick to see the difference between what you say and what you do—and once they see that discrepancy—they don't take you or your religion all that seriously. Practice consistently what you Preach—or don't preach it!!

Also remember that your children don't automatically know what you know—they need to be patiently led and taught.

Babies of Dogs are little dogs; cats produce little cats; horses produce little horses; But Babies of Christians are not born little Christians; they are little heathens and must learn to Know God, and be converted themselves, to become Christians. God has no grandchildren! As parents we forget this fact.

John 5:19, 20. Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. 20 For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel.

3. "When your children ask"

Place things and seek out situations and experiences that will cause your children to ASK –if they ASK,

then they will listen to your answer. There must be friendliness and trust between parents and children so they feel free to ask and so they will feel you will give them truthful answers.

Joshua 4:6 That this may be a sign among you, that when your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean ye by these stones?

Exodus 12:26, 27. And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? 27 That ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the LORD'S passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses. And the people bowed the head and worshipped.

Answer Childish Questions truthfully; and tell stories of the past and worthwhile things as often as possible. NEVER tell fairy tales or fiction.

Joshua 4:21, 22. And he spake unto the children of Israel, saying, When your children shall ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean these stones? 22 Then ye shall let your children know, saying, Israel came over this Jordan on dry land.

4. "And they shall teach thee"

Use God's Lesson book of Nature to teach from earliest years.

Proverbs 6:6 Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise:

Job 12:7, 8. But ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee: 8 Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee: and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee.

There is not any spiritual lesson where you cannot find an example, parable or demonstration in Nature. God is the author of both the Bible and the Book of Nature—so, rightly understood, they always agree.

You do not have to be a naturalist to teach from the book of nature. Notice the Sermon on the Mount. If you know nothing about nature, not even the names of the commonest birds, flowers and animals—then get some guide books and learn together with your children—they will enjoy this and feel that you are not so out of touch with them as to be unreachable.

5. "That they may be one!"

Husband and wife must work as a team not as competitors. Never should one downplay the other.

John 17:11 "And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are."

John 17:21 "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."

John 17:22 "And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:"

John 17:23 "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me."

Matthew 12:25 "And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand:"

Mark 3:25 "And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand."

Colossians 3:18 “Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. 19 Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them. 20 Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord. 21 Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged.”

Women in our society seem to specialize in belittling and scorning our men-folk. This is evil and also self-destructive—like it would be to saw the pillars and beams that hold up our house in half and then wonder why it would fall on us. Let it be said of us all, men and women, that: “She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness.” Proverbs 31:26

6. “Search me O God.”

Psalms 139:23, 24 Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: 24 And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

Watch out and pray much that you can see yourself as your children see you, and that you are not being inconsistent and unreasonable with them.

Jeremiah 17:9 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

Ephesians 6:4 And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

Colossians 3:21 Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged.

Remember—your children are NOT your property!!! All human kind are God’s property by Creation and Redemption. They are God’s property and need to come under the Golden rule and the law “Love your Neighbor as yourself”. The Hebrews KNEW they had to answer to God for the proper raising of the children—but that seems to have faded from our minds as we seem to rely on church school and S School teachers and we sit them in front of videos of talking vegetables and other cartoons on Sabbath and go and chit-chat with our friends—instead of taking them into nature and interacting with them one on one!!

Oh what a legacy most of us have to answer for!! God is not going to excuse you and demand an account from the teacher or the SS teacher—He holds PARENTS accountable for their children’s salvation!! Friends, if you have failed in these things, do not delay to repent in sackcloth and ashes and apologize to your families and take up your duties! If you have not been a friend and companion to your children, it will be hard to change—but God will honor true repentance and you can ask Him for the wisdom.

James 1:5. If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

I have to here say something about the way we unconsciously disparage our young people and children by referring to them as “Kids”; and rug rats and yard apes and so on.

Those kinds of names just make children seem silly and not important—somehow a different species from the adults. Children are the younger members of God's Family! He has warned us that their angels have direct access to the face of the Father in heaven! He told us it were better that we have a millstone tied around our neck and be drowned, rather than offend these younger members of His family!!

I know it has become the pervasive custom in our society—but should we follow such a custom? Does it not separate the children as of somehow lesser status? I have had people argue with me up and down that the term ‘Kids’ is not disparaging—but I believe that if we are honest, and you say the word ‘children’ in your mind and then say the word ‘kids’—it does conjure up a different picture.

What about their precious individuality when they are referred to constantly as ‘the kids’? “You kids get in here to the table!” How much better to say their names? “John and Mary please come to the table.” Do you like to be referred to only in generic terms? Is it not more pleasant to be addressed by your name?

In my experience it has an effect on the young ones as well—they seem to say—“Oh well, it doesn’t matter how I behave—I’m just a kid and kids are just supposed to play and act silly.” I was especially horrified recently to hear a Youth Director at a convention talk about ‘these college age KIDS’!

We are doing it to our seniors now too—and some of the terms I would not want to say here. Exactly what age bracket do we think is still worthy of respect anyway? Enough said; I will leave this thought with you.

ALWAYS set the right example: When you fall or fail confess it to your family and ask forgiveness!

James 5:16 Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

7. “Holy Ground” Draw a sharp line between the holy and the unholy.

Josiah 5:15 And the captain of the LORD'S host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so.

Leviticus 10:10 And that ye may put difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean;

Ezekiel 44:23 And they shall teach my people the difference between the holy and profane, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean.

Deuteronomy 12:30, 31 Take heed to thyself that thou be not snared by following them, after that they be destroyed from before thee; and that thou enquire not after their gods, saying, How did these nations serve their gods? even so will I do likewise. 31 Thou shalt not do so unto the LORD thy God: for every abomination to the LORD, which he hateth, have they done unto their gods; for even their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire to their gods. 32 What thing soever I command you, **observe to do it:** thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it.

What will we say if our children are lost through our neglect?

Jeremiah 13:20 Lift up your eyes, and behold them that come from the north: where is the flock that was given thee, thy beautiful flock?

What if you feel it is too late—you’ve made all the mistakes and now you can’t change it?

Jeremiah 31:16, 17. Thus saith the LORD; Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears: for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the LORD; and they shall come again from the land of the enemy. 17 And there is hope in thine end, saith the LORD, that thy children shall come again to their own border.

The 7 Bible rules of communication are so important in our family relations! We will look at them briefly here:

1: Jesus: Make Jesus and His methods the center of our communications.

How little we actually speak of Jesus to our families in the daily walks of life. How little are our voices raised in praise to Him in the hearing of those near and dear to us. It is natural that what is truly important to us, what is on our hearts, we will speak of.

Matthew 12:34 . . . out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

If we are known to spontaneously speak of the joys of knowing Jesus and His praise rises easily to our lips, then those around us will know that our religion is not just a cloak to put on Sabbath morning when we go to church.

If we truly KNOW Jesus, we will love Him and what we love—we cheerfully talk about.

2: Joy: Make joy the mood of all relationship with our families.

The people around us need to see that our religion is a source of happiness to us.

Nehemiah 8:10 . . . neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the LORD is your strength.

Song is a vital part of our daily walk with Jesus and children respond very well to music and song. Starting to sing a sweet, happy chorus can sooth angry outbursts like sun through the mist.

“When Christ was a child like these children here, He was tempted to sin, but He did not yield to temptation. As He grew older He was tempted, but the songs His mother had taught Him to sing came into His mind, and He would lift His voice in praise. And before His companions were aware of it, they would be singing with Him. God wants us to use every facility which Heaven has provided for resisting the enemy.”--Ms 65, 1901. {VSS 412.1}

“Let praise and thanksgiving be expressed in song. When tempted, instead of giving utterance to our feelings, let us by faith lift up a song of thanksgiving to God.” {Ev 499.3}

“Song is a weapon that we can always use against discouragement. As we thus open the heart to the sunlight of the Saviour's presence, we shall have health and His blessing.”--Ministry of Healing, p. 254. (1905)

But we know that we are often confronted by tribulations and trials in the Christian walk—how are we to relate to these things? The Bible says:

James 1:2-4. My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; 3 Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. 4 But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

Those around us need to see our faith hold us up in joy and sweetness—even amid the struggles of life.

The Pony Story. A parable is told about a family which had two young boys. They were as opposite as humanly possible, even though they were brothers and close to the same age. The one boy was always complaining. No matter what, nothing ever pleased him and he could find the cloud for every silver lining in life.

The other boy was always patient and cheerful; he seemed to be able to find something to bring him joy in all situations. The parents decided on a plan one day to try and see if they could not change the direction of these two opposites a little.

To the negative child they presented a very costly gift—something fine that any boy of his age would just be thrilled to have. For the cheerful child they wrapped up a large box of horse manure.

The negative boy opened his fine gift and immediately spied something about it he did not like—and began to grumble. The cheerful boy pulled the lid from his box of manure and sat there stunned for a minute or two. Then suddenly he leaped to his feet and headed for the door. His parents called him back; “Where are you going?” they asked concerned.

“Outside”, he shouted—“with that much horse manure there’s got to be a PONY!!” And I am sure, of

course, the boy got his pony.

So when trials thicken and you seem up to your neck in horse manure—thank God and declare confidently, “There’s got to be a pony in all this Lord—I just know it!”

3: Choice: Present a choice; do not force a solution on others.

Deuteronomy 30:19 I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:

Joshua 24:15 And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve;

God honors the freedom of choice He has given to us. If He wanted to force us—do you not think He is capable of it? Then why do we feel we have a right to be forcing, manipulating, and brow beating others to make them follow our ideas of right?

4: Humiliation: avoid a feeling of superiority.

Philippians 2:3 Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

"The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way." Psalm. 25:9.

Do we nag? Do we make statements that disparage the other? Do we have pointed sarcasms that cut and a harshness that bruises in our communications? Do we make the persons we speak to feel that they personally mean nothing and we are only ‘at them’ because they are annoying to us?

Gentleness is needed – not high handed pontifications from our proud pedestals. It was said of Jesus:

A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory. Matthew 12:20

Pride and haughtiness are characteristics of the Beast. Jesus said:

Matthew 11:28 Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

Are our family members finding comfort when near us—this can only be if we exhibit the spirit of meekness and gentleness—esteeming others as better than us.

Kindness and courtesy are also a part of the gentleness that makes us great. Saying thank-you and please even to the smallest of children—and showing appreciation for efforts put forth by others. When we ask someone to do something for us, we can word it so sweetly so it is a request and not a harsh demand—wording and tone can make the world of difference.

Gentleness and sweetness can make a home a heaven on earth. Our society scorns such graces and exalts toughness over tenderness; but David stated: Psalm 18:35 Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation: and thy right hand hath holden me up, and thy gentleness hath made me great.

5, 6, 7: Faith; Hope; Love – they go together

We know we need to have faith and hope that our labors for others will be rewarded—BUT we need to realize that our family members need us to have and show faith in them, and to give them hope that they can indeed overcome and that they can find fulfillment in life.

Encourage faith; talk faith; demonstrate faith both for ourselves and for what God can do in the lives of

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others.

Offer hope, especially when all the other person can see is defeat. Faith and hope go together.

Romans 8:24, 25. For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? 25 But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

A youth, sadly tied in the chains of addiction, listened day by day to his parents lecture and berate him. His heart longed for just one word of hope—one bit of kindly encouragement, but all he got was condemnation.

Love; so often we take for granted that our family members know we love them—BUT do they? How often children can be made to feel they are more the cause of problems and a nuisance, than an asset. We need the Agape Love principle, not just warm mushy feelings, in all our dealings with others—and how much more so with our dependent family members?

Romans 14:13 Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way. Or our spouse's way; or our children's way.

I sometimes think that the placement of mirrors in many strategic places on our walls can be a great learning tool. If only our family member's faces were mirrors so we could see the expression on our own face when we are berating them. Sadly we would often see reflected there the liniments of Satan rather than the tender Saviour. And remember that what we behold, we become.

Oh dear friends—may we spend so much time gazing into the face of Jesus, through His inspired word that we reflect His brightness on all around us.

Each one is given a bag of tools,
A shapeless mass, a book of rules
And each must make err life is flown,
A stumbling block or a stepping stone.

Benediction:

The LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: 26 The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace. Numbers 6:25, 26