



The *Pulpit Exchange*

It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. (1 Corinthians 1:21)
So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading. (Nehemiah 8:8) Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend. (Proverbs 27:17)

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Issue # 511

Directing Maturing Youth

As I was thinking about youth, I was thinking about how the youth keep changing all the time. This is not a job where we do it once and for all. Rather, it is a constant challenge to the Church. I was a little jolted to think about how many of the young people would not remember when I had a certain amount of association with the congregation here. Before brother Lynn was ordained, I helped brother Isaac

with the counsels and the communions in this end of the district. I would get here for that sometimes and it is hard to believe that a whole generation has passed since then. That however, does remind us that time moves on and the opportunities we have in directing youth are fleeting opportunities.

This title may immediately focus our attention on the responsibility of parents to their fami-

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lies. We agree that parents have the primary responsibility when it comes to helping young people. It also speaks to church leaders — those who are pastors of the flock. They are involved in helping young people. It relates to those who teach youth Sunday School and Bible school classes. This subject this evening is of interest to those who are not directly involved such as the grandparents among us who are no longer relating directly to

youth and to the singles because you are interested in the welfare and in the stability of the church. Therefore, this subject interests you even though you might not be directly involved. However, I will basically apply it to the home in this message. We will let the young people listen in to the things that we will say to their parents.

First of all, I would like to define the subject, “Directing Maturing Youth.” What are

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youth? Everyone knows what youth are. Youth has been defined as that time of life between childhood and maturity, or we could call it adulthood. That is the period of time between childhood and adulthood. That is somewhat general. When is someone no longer a child? Or, when is a person an adult? It is little like asking the question, “When does a boy become a man?”

I remember (I think I might even have been married already — I am not sure) when sometimes children would refer to me as a man. Inside I sort of winced because I really did not feel too much like a man. Thus, at either end of the spectrum of this period we call youth, there is not a specific point when one day a person is in one category and the next day he is in the other category. It happens gradually. We know a person is not a child and then the next day he is a youth, and then he is a youth — totally a youth, and then one day he automatically becomes an adult. It does not work that way.

Maturing — we are directing maturing youth. Maturity can be defined as having reached full natural growth, or development. It is not reaching a point where one no longer needs to grow or to learn. We never get to that point.

We keep learning and we keep growing all through life. Therefore, adulthood and maturity do not mean reaching a point like that. Rather, it means having become an adult. We use the term grownup sometimes. We talk about grownups. Well, they have reached a certain level of maturity.

Maybe we could also say it this way: maturity is reaching a point where one is now primarily responsible for himself, and when a person needs a certain amount of maturity to “strike out on his own,” so to speak, or to marry and to begin a home of his own. While he still learns from his parents, and still relates to his parents, he is not dependent on his parents like he was at one time. That change from total dependency on parents to not being dependent on them involves a period of time, and that change takes place very gradually.

Maturing is more than simply increasing in years, or getting older. You know if one continues on and then life continues and you live, why eventually you reach age twenty-one. Then we say a person is “of age.” Well, we know some are not very mature even then. Therefore, it is not merely a matter of adding years and getting older to be

mature. Maturing then would be referring to those people who are in the process of becoming mature. We understand, as I said, that it is gradual. We expect that our youth will be more mature at eighteen than they are at sixteen, but they are still not really mature, even at eighteen. Thus, they are maturing — they are in the process of maturing. In a sense all youth are in that process. I will be thinking more about directing the youth who are the later stages of maturing. I will focus more on the mid teens — sixteen or seventeen to the time of adulthood. Some of the things I will say apply to child training in general and apply to helping youth outside of those margins.

We all agree that children need to be trained. They need to be taught, disciplined, guided, and restrained. The Scripture says, “precept upon precept; line upon line” (Isaiah 28:10), and sometimes as parents we think, “Did we not say that? Did we not already tell you that?” But we need to say it again. The purpose of discipline and restraint is to help the child learn to discipline himself. We do not want to always, through the child’s life, be disciplining the child. Eventually the child needs to discipline himself.

When does the need for such training come to an end? When can the young person discipline himself, and when can he do it by himself? When the child surrenders to the Lord and becomes a Christian, it greatly enhances this process and it somewhat changes the relationship and (shall I say) the perspective when it comes to disciplining. However, even then children need much direction and they need some discipline, even after they become Christians in their early adolescence, if that is when they do.

This subject is important because, as parents, we have the tendency to back off when our children reach, let us say about eighteen years of age, and we think, “Well, now they ought to know all these things and we do not need to do so much.” Sometimes parents feel like they really do not have much to say anymore. I am not suggesting that youth are basically bad, but they do need direction. I believe they want direction, even if they come across to the contrary at times. There are some tendencies and temptations that are peculiar to youth.

There is a reason why the Bible talks about “youthful lusts” (2 Timothy 2:22). That is the Bible terminology. And there are temptations that face us in all

stages of life. We never escape that, but there are some of the tendencies that are more peculiar to young people. I have told this story before, but I remember so well the story that brother Isaac gave one time. He wanted to illustrate this point and he was telling us how that one Sunday night someone shot through their kitchen windows. He said, "I am sure that it was not a seventy-year-old man that did that." How could he be so sure? I think we all agree that he was probably right, but that illustrates something.

Youth is a time when people sort through what they have been taught. They sort through the influences that they have been under and are deciding what they will believe for themselves. For a period of time, children and young people believe what they are taught but because they have been taught it and because their parents believed it. Nevertheless, you cannot go through life and forever only believe something simply because your parents believed that. Sometime along the way everybody will need to decide for himself what he will believe. Youth is a time when that is sorted through. Then, at that time they see some of the shortcomings of their elders, parents, or other adults in the com-

munity, or in the congregation. They will need to decide what to do with that and, as I said, choose for themselves what they will believe.

Youth tend to be idealistic and think that they have things reasonably well figured out. I remember what it was like to be sixteen. Youth at that stage in life think that they have things figured out quite well and they would have some answers if only people would listen to them. It is amazing how that view changes greatly from about the ages of seventeen to twenty-one.

I would like to notice some Scriptural example and direction on this subject. This is not something the Bible has a lot of specifics for us on. However, I will start at 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." This obviously refers not only to directing young children. God uses the term household which probably included more than Abraham's own family because that would have included servants. "I know Abraham, that he will command his children and his household after him." In

Genesis 15:2, 3, Abraham refers to Eliezer as one that was born in his house and he said, "He can be my heir." Therefore, he was part of his household and Abraham was commanding his household to walk in the ways of the Lord.

I am picking out a few very familiar Scriptures here. In Joshua 24:15 we have that well known declaration, "And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD." That has been quoted many times and it has been an inspiration to many people, "as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD." You can do what you want. You make your choice, "but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD." It is true that each individual needs to make his choice, but Joshua would use his influence as much as he could to help his house make a right choice. He would not helplessly look on while they made their choices.

In the New Testament, in Acts 10 we have the account of Cornelius. This man was from even what we would consider perhaps a "worldly background."

This should be a challenge to us. Acts 10:2 refers to, and describes Cornelius as, "A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house." Evidently, he also had influenced his house.

In 1 Timothy 3 we have the qualifications for Church leaders. You might say, "Well, this is talking about Church leaders." Maybe they are in a different category, but remember Church leaders were taken from among the group, and they were to choose from among their group, their congregation, the church, brethren who had this qualification. 1 Timothy 3:4 says, "One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity." Children need to be ruled and parents need to be in charge. I think we get that from this Scripture. One who rules well his own house. Then we have the qualifications for the deacons in this chapter. 1 Timothy 3:12, "Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well." We have it also mentioned in Titus 1:6. I do not think I will refer to them, but they were to choose men whose children were "not accused of riot, or unruly." To be unruly means, "to not be subject to rule or be disobedient."

Parents should be able to give

some do's and don'ts to upper teens and have it stick. In order for that to happen it needs to happen long before children come to their upper teens. It is true that when children are on their own we can no longer impose our will on them, but they sometimes choose differently than what we would choose for them.

I would like to think of some guidelines for directing. And I would be the first to acknowledge that I am sure, I know, that I have not always lived up to what I will teach and carried it out. However, I still think it is right and I would like to commend it. I am sure as we look back, we see areas where we could have done better, and areas where we failed.

1) *We need to reckon with the tendency of youth to want to establish an identify separate from the previous generation.* That can express itself in so many ways. Whatever age you are, when you think back to your youth, in whatever church group you were in, I am sure there were things like that which young people wanted to do differently than the older people did. That is a natural tendency that young people have. They have an openness to their peer group that sometimes is beyond and above the openness they have to the influence of their parents.

When I was a teenager, most young men did not want a four-door car. That was the car for older people. The "in thing" was to have a two-door hardtop, especially with a manual transmission, and better yet if it had four speed on the floor. I know one young man who got a car that was not in that category. It was more in the four-door sedan category. Another single young man said to him, "What do you want with a family car?" Well, it was not so many years until he had a family and he needed a family car. I give that simply as an illustration. It is not as relevant today but the same thing is working itself out.

Today, it is something else. It might be the low maintenance hair cuts, the real short hair that is the fad now. Another example is when I was a teenager, we wore top coats for dress sometimes. I suppose most young men today would not want to be caught wearing an overcoat, or a topcoat for dress because they do not want to look like an old man or dress like the old men do. Those are illustrations. I am not saying all of that is bad, but parents should reckon with that tendency and help youth to think right about that.

2) *Parents should reckon with the influence of society that*

glamourizes youth. Along with that is today's emphasis on individualism and freedom from restraint. Possibly we have been influenced more than we realize or care to admit. However, these things do rub off and we live in a time when the individual is held up — individual rights, freedoms, and happiness is the ultimate in life.

3) *We need to establish and maintain a relationship.* This is not established when children become youth. It needs to be done before. There must be communication between parents and young people. Some of us talk a lot but that does not necessarily guarantee good communication. We should spend time talking. How else do you know what your youth think, if you do not talk to them? I am not only thinking about specific instructions or teaching, where you say, "Now, this is what the Bible teaches. These are the principles. These are the applications. This is what the church stands for. This is what we want you to do." That is good and necessary.

I am thinking about being friends, enjoying one another's company. This can be done around the table at meal time, and lingering after a meal and visiting in general. Some of that needs to be done. Some will say,

"We do not have time for that we need to get to work." Well, I say you need to take time to do some of that. Show that you are interested and care about them and are concerned for their welfare. Communication should not only be discussing the work that you are planning. Remember parents, our youth will be friends with someone and their thinking will be shaped by the people who are talking to them. Remember that. Our tendency as parents when our children get a little older is to be aloof and not be too involved and hope that somehow they will catch on from everything they see and hear in church and eventually embrace the right things. Some will and some will not. Some will not even if we do all the right things.

I came across an article recently that had some ideas along this line that were somewhat new to me and I almost hesitate to share them. I want you to think about it. It made me think. This writer was talking about what people believe and whether or not they are believing the truth. He went on to say that there are in American Evangelical churches today (I think in recent years it was as high as 91%) young people who claim to be born again who did not believe in absolute truth. He raised a question,

“How will we communicate truth to people?” Then he says, “Our behaviour is driven by our values, and our values are formed by our beliefs. But, for nine years I had been struggling day and night with the question, ‘What engenders our beliefs?’” If we believe something that will form our values and direct our behaviour, but what makes us believe what we believe?

He said, “About eleven months ago the light came on and it was not what I had anticipated. What I discovered is that our beliefs are engendered by our relationships.” This could be taken too far, but I think there is some truth to that. The people whom we have a relationship with will influence what we believe. Then, he refers to Psalm 86:11, “Teach me thy way, O LORD; I will walk in thy truth.” Then, in verse 13 he says, “For great is thy mercy toward me.” That is the idea, “Thy love toward me, “and thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell.” He goes on to say then that he thinks in helping children we need to do is develop loving intimate relationships with anyone we hope to impart information to if we want to impact that person’s life. Secondly, we need to be an example of what we are teaching. Those two things he sees as the

most important in this matter of relationship.

He then uses Jesus’ example in John 13 where, the writer in the beginning of the chapter talks about His love for His disciples and then later on in verse 15 He says, “I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.” Somehow, sometimes as parents we think that we can get our children to believe and to do the right things even though we know that we ourselves are not quite living up to it, but we hope somehow they will.

Now, I would like to explain what I mean about love and the need to have a relationship. I am not talking about mere sentimentalism. I am not talking about this gushy kind of thing and a lot of outward displays of affection. That is not what I am talking about. There needs to be a genuine interest, concern, and love for the soul and welfare of the souls of our youth.

4) *We need to be ready to confront or challenge our youth.* We might be inclined to feel that these upper teenage children do not want to be interfered with. They have a way of putting their guards up and getting us, as parents, to back off. If we give into that we are actually letting them down. Parents, you may not be afraid. You cannot be afraid to

sometimes disappoint your young people if it is necessary. At times parents get to the place where they have the kind of relationship where they are afraid even to challenge or confront. They never would want to say, “No,” to the disappointment of the young person. Be ready to challenge.

Along with this I would say we do not need to convince or persuade before requiring. Sometimes people have that idea that I cannot require something of my young people until I have convinced them and they also see it that way and agree with it. Well, it is good to try and convince, and it is good to persuade. We need to do that and we want to eventually come to that place, but it is like one father told me, “Sometimes I have said, ‘Well, this is how we will do it and I will give some of the reasons later, but this is how it must be.’”

I would take Jesus’ example in this also, again from John 13. Jesus said to Peter, “What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter” (John 13:7). Jesus did not wait to wash the disciples feet until they perfectly understood what it all meant and what it is all about. He simply did it. He gave them an example. Sometimes as parents we need to do that and say,

“Well, this is the standard. This is the rule that we have. This is how it will be done. This is what we are asking of you, and we do need to.” We can do that even before we have persuaded them. We can insist on certain conduct or standards within reasonable margins. It is proper to require what some other homes do not. As long as children live at home, even if they are well beyond marriageable age, as long as they live in your house you can establish some standards and say, “This is the standard for our home.”

Sometimes when we raise some questions to young people. We raise some challenges about what they are going to do and we have some reservations. One of the accusations that may likely come is, “You do not trust us.” That hurts. That is an accusation. You know that is quite effective on parents sometimes. “You do not trust us.” We want to trust our young people. Remember, it is not really a matter of trust as much as it is understanding something about the nature of young people, their inclinations, and their need for guidance, to help them flee these “youthful lusts” that we talked about. That is what Paul says to Timothy, “Flee also youthful lusts” (2 Timothy 2:22). Fleeing is something that you do when there is

danger. You put forth effort to get away. Young people need help to do that.

5) *Another argument that young people use sometimes is, "Well, everybody else is doing it," or some variation of that argument.* Maybe not everybody, but certain people. It will mean fairly much needing to use their names. Even maturing youth find security in something solid that does not move at every challenge.

6) *Another guideline is guard social life.* I will share a few points on this. A little over a year ago, we had, in one of our congregations been facing maybe a new challenge in this area of social life and a clamour for more activities for young people. We had a heads of home meeting in that congregation to try to give them some direction to the fathers and appeal to them. We had drawn up a few things that we were planning to share so that we as a ministry knew what we would talk about.

Some of them were taken from our play statement. "We recognize that youth is a time of greater social awareness and that the social needs of this group are somewhat unique. The social interests of youth need to be directed in such a way that they do not become predominant and

crowd out a necessary spiritual focus. Until age 18, young people should be with their families and not left to follow their social interests without parental supervision. It is not good when the primary influence on youth comes from their peer group rather than from parents and church leaders. And too much running will make the young people too independent. The recent clamour for additional youth oriented activities seems to be more socially driven than service motivated. Youth sponsored and directed activities, no matter how good they may appear will feed an appetite for that which we consider to be out of bounds."

In that particular situation there were a few parents who said, "Well, we have to do this to keep our young people from doing something worse you know — going way out." "To say that these things are needed to keep young people from becoming involved in unacceptable forms of recreation is reflecting a wrong view. We need to build conviction against the world's methods of pleasure seeking rather than to think that we can contain such interests by providing a substitute." Then, we go on to say some things we do approve of. "We approve of

small groups of young people gathering to sing for personal enjoyment and/or singing for older people or shut-ins. Primarily this should be people of the same gender.” And, “We do not favour having large groups of young people together even for service activities such as singing institutions or for work projects,” and so on.

I give this because that reflects my view of what I believe about helping young people. Young people can be satisfied without a lot of playing. That is certainly the ideal we want to come to. When it relates to social life, parents need to give definite direction in courtship. It should be understood that young people will get your approval before beginning a friendship, and that you regulate frequency of contact and regulate (by that I mean the speed of the courtship and so on).

As we think of guidelines, we are facing an array of electronic technology today. That is something we did not face twenty years ago. I will not give a lot of specifics on this. Do we need to have the latest? There are some things that are not necessarily right or wrong within themselves, and maybe someday we will have them, but do we need to be the first ones to have them? Do our young people need to be

the first ones to have them? Sometimes these things become status things, and you feel you must have it because everybody else has it — all the other young people have it, and you do not fit if you do not have it. I am discovering there are things out there for our young people when it comes to listening to music and all of that, we as parents hardly even know exist as far as the capabilities and the technology with regard to computer use, cell phones, and all or any kind of media, we need to be alert in giving some direction.

As it comes to directing maturing youth, I will give a little of the other side now. It is proper to let them make some of their own decisions. Eventually they will need to make their own decisions. As they grow, mature, and prove trustworthy they can be allowed to make more and more of their own decisions as they get older. You say, “Well, what if they do not make the right choice? If I let them decide, what if they do not decide right?” That is a concern. I would like to ask you as parents a question, “Did you ever make a mistake?” I am sure all of us made some mistakes. We learn from some of those mistakes. It is okay to let them make some mistakes. We do try to save them from the

major error or blunder, and try to see that it does not happen, but sometimes we need to step back a little, especially as they get closer to maturity. Let them do a few things and maybe let them have the freedom to make a few mistakes, and to learn some things by experience.

We would like to spare them as much as we can and we would like to save them from that. Yet, it seems some of that probably needs to be done, and needs to happen at times. Maybe one illustration might be the use of money. I have almost despaired sometimes thinking that maybe we did not quite communicate everything we should have about the value of money. However, it seems after they have their own families and are responsible to make ends meet, and so on, it is surprising how much they learn about the value of money. I am not saying we cannot teach them anything, but you know there is nothing quite like losing some money, or regretting an unwise expenditure to help one learn the value of money. Sometimes we need to let them find that out. That is part of it.

We need to stay close, communicate, and be concerned. We

need to be giving direction. We need to be saying, "No," to some things. We should avoid the extreme of never letting children grow up. That is the other extreme. Probably we do not have as much problem with that, but, that does happen sometimes where parents cannot let go and always keep children tied to the apron strings. I know cases where adult children, children who are approaching the age of being old enough to be grandparents but are not married and are living at home whose parents hardly let them make their own decisions. That is, of course, an exception, and somewhat extreme but as parents we should avoid that extreme of thinking our children will forever be dependent on us.

All this that we have been talking about is a very important work and we cannot afford to give up on it. Even if you have made some mistakes and if you have failed with some children, if you still have an opportunity do not give up. Our children are really all we can take with us to glory. May God give us a vision and a burden to do what we must do in our, in this time.

Scripture References

Genesis		Isaiah		1 Timothy	
15:2, 3	252	28:10	252	3:4	254
18:19	253		John	3:12	254
Joshua		13:7	258	2 Timothy	
24:15	254	13:15	257	2:22	252, 258
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86:11	257	10:2	254	1:6	254
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From the Previous Issue:

How to Keep the Lord's Day Holy

From a message by James Nolt

Thursday, January 13, 2005

Winter Bible School

Woodbury Mennonite Church

Remembering to Keep the Lord's Day Holy

From a message by James Hershberger

Summersville Mennonite Church

Greensburg, KY

Preached at a Ministers' Meeting

November 4, 2004

Book Reprint (Continued)

One Hundred Lessons In Bible Study

LESSON 34.

Plan of Salvation. — Sanctification.

I. Definition.

1. A preparation. — Joshua 3:5; Exodus 19:11; 2 Timothy 2:21.

2. To hallow. — Leviticus 10:3; Timothy 20:12; Isaiah 29:23.

3. A setting apart or consecration. — Genesis 2:3; Exodus 13:2; Leviticus 8:10.

4. Cleansed, pure, holy. — 1 Thessalonians 5:23; 2 Timothy 2:21; Hebrews 10:10, 14.

NOTE. — All these meanings may be merged into one — Purified and set apart to the service of God.

II. Sanctifying agents.

1. God. — 1 Thessalonians 3:11–13; 5:23.
2. Christ. — 1 Corinthians 1:30; Hebrews 10:10, 14; 13:12.
3. The Holy Ghost. — Ezekiel 36:25–27; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; Galatians 5:16–23.
4. The blood. — Hebrews 13:12; 1 John 1:7.
5. The word. — John 17:17, 19.

III. How attained.

1. By submission to God. — Romans 6:19–22.
2. By faith. — Acts 26:18.
3. By separation from the world. — Romans 12:1, 2; 2 Corinthians 6:17; 7:1.
4. Through chastisement or suffering. — Hebrews 12:11.
5. By seeking after it. — Hebrews 11:6; 12:14, 15.

IV. Sanctification is —

1. An instantaneous work. — Hebrews 10:14.
2. A progressive work. — Ephesians 4:13, 15; 1 Thessalonians 4:1–10; 2 Peter 3:17, 18.

NOTE. — The instantaneous work takes place when, by submission to God, and the washing of the blood, we are sanctified as kings and priests to God. The progressive work is the constant growth in grace, knowledge, purity, etc., which characterizes all true Christians.

V. Holiness essential to salvation. — Hebrews 12:14; 1 Corinthians 6:9, 10; Galatians 5:19–21; Ephesians 5:5; Colossians 3:6; Revelation 22:14, 15.

VI. What sanctification means for us.

1. Union with Christ. — John 17:21–23; Hebrews 2:11.
2. Christian perfection. — Hebrews 10:14.
3. A sinless life. — 1 John 3:8; 5:18.
4. A continual growth in grace. — 2 Peter 3:17, 18; Ephesians 4:13–15; 1 Thessalonians 4:1–10.
5. Assurance of eternal happiness. — Acts 20:32; 26:18; Colossians 1:12, 13.

1. Discuss the relation between sanctification and the following: justification; conversion; redemption; regeneration.
2. Are noisy demonstrations at religious gatherings any evidence of spiritual life?
3. Which is worth most, accurate theories on sanctification, or a sanctified life?
4. Give the characteristics of a sanctified life as applied to business; to conversation; to society; to religious work.
5. What constitutes Christian perfection?

LESSON 35.

Ordinances. — Baptism.

I. Definition.

1. Derivations from the Greek “baptizo.” — Tinge, dye, color, plunge, stain, smear, wet, wash, dip, sprinkle, pour.
2. Webster — “The application of water to a person, as a sacrament or religious ceremony, by which he is initiated into the visible church of Christ.

II. Kinds.

1. Water baptism.—Matthew 3:5, 6; Acts 2: 41, etc.
2. Spirit baptism. — Matthew 3:11; Acts 1:5; 1 Corinthians 12:13, etc.
3. Baptism with fire. — Matthew 3:11; Luke 3:16.
4. Baptism of suffering. — Matthew 20:22, 23; 26: 39–42; Mark 10:38, 39; Luke 12:50; Romans 8:16–18.

III. Design of John’s baptism. — Repentance Mark 1:4; Luke 3:3; Acts 13:24; 19: 4).

IV. Design of Christian baptism.

1. Of Spirit baptism.
 - a. The saving ordinance. — 1 Corinthians 12:13; John 6:63; Ephesians 4:30; John 3:5.
 - b. Initiation into the visible body of Christ. — 1 Corinthians 12:13.
 - c. Purifies in the sight of God. — Ezekiel 36:25–27; Titus 3:3–7; Hebrews 9:14.

- d. Confers spiritual power. — Acts 1:8; 2:1–47; 8:17–19.
- e. Prepares the heart for every Christian work. — Hebrews 9:14; Acts 10:47.

2. Of water baptism.

- a. A symbol of the baptism of the Spirit. — Matthew 3:11; Acts 1:5; Matthew 28:19; 1 Corinthians 12:13.
- b. The initiatory rite which inducts into the visible church. — Matthew 28:19.
- c. An act of obedience to fulfill all righteousness. — Matthew 3:15.
- d. The answer of a good conscience toward God. — 1 Peter 3:21.
- e. Typifies the purification of the heart. — Titus 3; 5; 1 Peter 3:21.
- f. Signifies the remission of sins. — Acts 2:38; 22:16.

V. Facts looking to pouring as the Bible mode of baptism.

- 1. The Bible distinctly recognizes it as a baptism. — Matthew 3:11; Acts 1:5; 2:1–21; 10: 44–48; 11:16.

QUESTION. — Is there any other mode mentioned in the Bible called baptism? If so, give references.

- 2. Being a symbol of Spirit baptism, the symbol and the real should correspond in form.

NOTE. — On the day of Pentecost (Acts 2; in the house of Cornelius (Acts 10:44–48); at Ephesus (Acts 19:1–6 ; wherever the least reference is made to the baptism of the Holy Ghost, it consisted of an outpouring. Now notice the language of our Saviour: “John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost” (Acts 1:5). If the baptism of the Holy Ghost was an outpouring, what should the baptism with water be?

- 3. 1 John 5:7, 8.
 - a. Three witnesses in heaven — The Father, The Word, The Holy Ghost — are one.
 - b. Three witnesses in earth — The Spirit (always an outpouring), The blood (flowed from His wounded side), The water- (?) — agree in one.

VI. Why we cannot depend upon immersion as the Bible mode of baptism.

1. The Greek word "*baptizo*" never translated "immerse" when translated by both immersionists and effusionists.

NOTE. — The King James Version and other foreign language translations of the Reformation era do not have the word immersion in it. Yet the same text is taken by translators who are interested in establishing immersion as the Bible mode of baptism, and the word "immersion" found in abundance. What conclusion must be taken from this? That whenever the translators were composed of men who represented all shades of opinion respecting the Bible mode of baptism: when truth, and not partisan advantage, was the object sought in translation — it was considered that the original meaning of the Greek word "*bapto*" or "*baptizo*" did not warrant them to translate it immerse; but when immersionists alone translated the Bible, they found it to their advantage to make the Bible read agreeable to their prejudices.

2. No instance recorded in the Bible where a clear case of putting under water is called baptism.

3. Our Saviour's definition of baptism points to pouring as the mode (Acts 1:5; 2:1–21).

4. There are many instances on record where baptism by immersion would have been a physical impossibility.

VII. A few references explained.

1. John 3:5.

a. Born of water (the Word). — Isaiah 55:1; Jeremiah 2:13; 17:13; John 4:14; 1 Corinthians 4:15; 15:1, 2; Hebrews 2:2–4; James 1:21.

b. Born of the Spirit. — John 3:6–8; Romans 5:1–5; 8:9, 15–17; 1 Corinthians 2:7–12; Galatians 4:6; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Peter 1:2.

2. Romans 6:3, 4.

a. "Baptized into Jesus Christ" — by the Spirit. — 1 Corinthians 12:13.

b. "Baptized into his death" — by the baptism of suffering. — Luke 12:50; Romans 6:6.

c. "Buried with him by baptism into death." — "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. — Colossians 3:3.

d. "Walk in newness of life." — Every one baptized into Jesus Christ is truly converted.

3. Colossians 2:12. — (See explanation on Romans 6:3,

4).

4. 1 Corinthians 10:1, 2.

a. Typical of a baptism of the Holy Ghost, and with fire.
— Exodus 40:34; Numbers 14:14; Nehemiah 9:12, 19.

b. Baptism with water. — On dry ground (Exodus 14:22). Clouds poured out water (Psalm 77:17–20).

5. 1 Peter 3:21.

a. “The like figure.” — Figure of the ark, first on dry ground, then partly submerged in water, the windows of heaven open (Genesis 7:11), and rain poured upon it.

b. “Doth also now save us.” — Being “the answer of a good conscience toward God.”

VIII. Remarks.

1. History may throw some light on the subject of baptism; but we should be careful not to attach more importance upon the history written by man than upon the history written by God.

2. In all cases and under all circumstances, let the meaning and use of baptism be considered of more importance than the mode of administering it.

1. Wherein does Christ’s baptism differ from that of John the Baptist?

2. Have we any evidence that John’s converts were rebaptized upon becoming disciples of Christ?

3. Who are proper subjects for baptism?

4. Have we any evidence of water baptism in the Old Testament?

5. Give the instances of baptism recorded in the New Testament, and state the circumstances of each.

Children’s Book Reprint *continued*

The Little Woodchopper

The following day they went on their journey through thick forest, the same as the day before. There seemed to be no end to it. As it was getting dark,

they came to a place where four paths met. Here they halted and built a fire because of the wolves.

“I don’t understand why you have come so far,” said William

timidly. "We must be now many miles away from home."

"We have come to shoot deer," replied one of the brothers.

"But not very far from our cabin there is plenty of game. Why have you gone so far?"

"You shall soon know why," was the short answer; and when he would have asked more questions, he was told to keep quiet. After supper, the brothers soon stretched out on the grass and were fast asleep. William too selected a place near the fire to sleep; but before lying down he knelt, and folding his hands as his father had taught him, he whispered,

"Dear Father, think of me, and take care of me. Thou knowest my father is dead, and my brothers do not love me. I have nobody on earth that loves me, only Caesar, and they have locked him up in the cabin. O blessed God, remember me and protect me. I ask it for Jesus' sake. Amen."

After praying, he laid down and soon went to sleep. Then it seemed to him as if some one said to him,

"Fear not, I will take care of you."

Sleep in peace, poor boy! the faithful, never slumbering eye of thy mighty and loving Father watches over thee.

How it would have frightened him if he had seen his brothers rise cautiously very early in the morning, saddle the donkey and quietly slip away. Their wicked plot had succeeded. Soon they were hidden in the forest and William was alone. Our little friend slept undisturbed till the sun was quite high, throwing its warm rays right into his face. He could not at first remember where he was and how he got to this place, but when he saw the smoking embers at his side, the two days' experience came before his mind. But where was the donkey which had carried him so faithfully, and where were his brothers?

He, jumped up and called his brothers as loudly as he could, but the only answer he received was the echo of his own voice. Suddenly the thought came to him that his brothers might have wickedly forsaken him. He could hardly believe it, but when noon came and nothing could be seen or heard of them, he began to cry bitterly. What should become of him — alone in the great forest among wolves, and perhaps other wild beasts!

"O, how wicked you are!" sobbed the little fellow, when he thought of his brothers. "You have brought me here and left me. What would father say if he

knew it!”

“The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him.” 2 Chronicles 16:9.

Thus William mourned for some time, but gradually grew quieter. The thought of Jesus, Who saw him and was caring for him, comforted him; and at last he did what all children who are in need or in trouble should do—he knelt down and prayed earnestly to the Lord for His help and protection. After praying, he wondered what he should do. To follow his brothers was impossible, for they had intentionally selected a spot where several paths met, so that he would be at a loss to know which one to choose to follow them. His heart was very heavy, and from time to time he would whisper,

“Lord Jesus, help me! I am alone and forsaken; and I am hungry and thirsty. O Lord, help me!” and he felt comforted.

“Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me.” Psalm 50:15.

While the poor boy was sitting there, the thought came to him: “Perhaps my brothers have not left me, but have gone hunting and will be back in the evening.”

This faint hope gave him courage, and he made up his mind to wait till night. Meanwhile hunger and thirst made their demands, so he stood up to see if there was anything that had been left in the grass. Much to his Pleasure, he found a large piece of bread and a piece of meat; perhaps one of the brothers left it there purposely with a feeling of pity.

With a thankful heart William ate it, and looking around him he saw a creek, clear as crystal, where he satisfied his thirst. Thus God had already answered his prayers and given him a meal in the forest. William was thankful for it, and his confidence in the Lord increased. He believed that God would lead him out of the forest to some one who would direct him to his home and not allow him to die of hunger.

My young reader, are you thankful for the blessings which God gives you from day to day? Remember, God is the sustainer of us all, and every good and perfect gift comes from Him. Do not forget to thank Him for all these blessings, even the smallest, for God loves thankful hearts.

The day was declining; the sun was far in the west and the trees began to cast long shadows. At last the fiery ball disappeared

altogether, and the evening twilight set in. The birds ceased their singing and went to their nests; the owl started her dismal call, and large bats were flying around William. The little fellow lost all courage and had given up the hope that his brothers might return.

“Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is.” Jeremiah 17:7.

Having been raised in the forest, he knew he should find some place where the wolves would not get him, so he searched for a suitable tree in which he might spend the night. Most of them were too thick for him, or the first branches were too high for him to reach. At last he found one right near the path which looked safe, and he began to climb it immediately. After reaching a comfortable place, he sat down and tied his left arm to a branch, fearing he might fall asleep and fall down.

Night came on getting darker and darker. The wind started to blow and shook the trees, but this did not frighten him because he was used to its howlings; he had often listened to it at home with a quiet enjoyment. Of course, it was quite different to sit near the warm hearth at home, protected from the storm, than to sit in the branches of a tree swinging to

and fro. William was very brave for his age, but one sound made him afraid; the howl of a wolf in the distance, just like he heard the evening before.

“What time I am afraid, I will trust in Thee.” Psalm 56:3.

He lifted his eyes upward and from his heart arose a quiet prayer to his Father, which gave him courage. Looking around him, he saw a light in the far distance, which he followed in the direction of the path. The light disappeared for a moment but again he saw it on the same spot. He jumped down from the tree as quickly as possible, for he thought there would be some one where the light was, and ran as fast as his feet could carry him over the uneven path, fearing to meet the wolf he had heard just a short time before.

After running for a quarter of an hour he reached a point from which he could see the light again, but it seemed larger this time because he was closer to it.

William stood still for a moment to breathe, then he began to run again. Just as the moon came out from under a cloud, he noticed a brook too wide to jump across, but he could not stop to think what he should do, for he heard an animal coming towards him through the underbrush. Just then he stum-

bled over a root of a tree and fell unconscious, but when he came to himself again, the animal was so close he could feel the warm breath; he expected any moment to feel the sharp teeth in his flesh, but instead of it being a wolf it was a dog, and it began to lick William's cheeks and bark for joy. "When William arose, the dog jumped upon him, as he was so glad to see his loved companion once more.

"Caesar, my dear good Caesar," cried William, And he noticed a piece of the rope with which his brother had tied him in the house three days ago. He wondered how his dog got to him, but knew the Lord directed it all, and he was so thankful to the Lord for bringing to him his best friend on earth. He soon forgot all his fear, and anxious to get out of the woods started again for the light, Caesar by his side. He started to wade through the brook, but when he got out into the current, the water was up to his hips; the current threw him over, but good faithful Caesar swam to him, took his clothes in his teeth and pulled him to the shore. Once more William loved and caressed his dog, then went on with his companion by his side.

"I know that the Lord will maintain the cause of the afflict-

ed, and the right of the poor." Psalm 140:12.

They had almost reached the top of the hill before them when the boy noticed not far away a pair of fiery red spots and at the same time heard the low howl of a wolf. William stood still, but Caesar, who also saw the wolf, put himself in front of his master ready to fight and growled savagely. In a few minutes the wolf gave a powerful leap upon the dog, but Caesar, who was accustomed to fighting with wolves, took his enemy by the throat and both fought desperately. William, who could do nothing, would not leave his faithful dog. He did pray to his heavenly Father, who had already led him in such a remarkable way. Both animals seemed to be of equal strength, till at last Caesar broke out in a victorious barking, and the wolf disappeared in the underbrush.

Caesar then went to William and seemed to say, "Come out of here quickly," so they both ran on as fast as they could for a while. When they reached the top of the second hill, William again saw the light coming from a cabin like his father's and ran on till he reached the fence. Not taking time to look for a gate, he climbed over the fence, and Caesar bounced over.



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