

SERMON FOR OCTOBER 2, 2022

TEXT: PROVERBS 22:6

THEME: TRAINING FOR LIFE

Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it.

In the name of Jesus:

Robert Fulgum is an American author who in the late 1980's wrote the best selling book, "All I Really Need to Know I learned in Kindergarten." As the title suggests, Fulgum makes the case that the basic lessons that are learned in kindergarten are lessons that are foundational to life. These lessons include: share everything, play fair, don't hit people, put things back where you found them, clean your own mess, don't take things that aren't yours, say you are sorry when you hit someone, wash your hands before you eat, and flush the toilet, among others. Basic life long lessons that stay with you for the rest of your life. Fulgum goes on to explain how the world would be improved if adults would adhere to the same basic rules that children learn in kindergarten. But note, these are lessons that need to be taught, by one who knows the lessons, that is a teacher, and the lessons need to be learned and applied by the student or learner, the kindergartner in this case.

But this same learning takes place throughout a young person's life, doesn't it? Parents will enroll their children in preschool so that they can get

a head start on their education before they get to kindergarten and future grades where the learning doesn't stop.

And the learning doesn't stop. In fact, parents are continually showing their children the way that they are to live their lives, rules that they are to follow, expectations that they are to fulfill as members of the family. Expectations such as don't be mean to your brother and sister, don't hit, listen to your parents when they are speaking to you, take your dirty dishes to the sink, and clean your room, among others. When the children are older, the parents will assist with driver's education, opening a checking account, maybe even buying a first home. As adults, we don't expect our children to know how to do things, and so we teach. Even as adults we teach and learn about issues that affect our lives, our community, our nation. We learn about the expectations of an employer, how to do a better job while on the job, or we learn to increase knowledge or skill in other areas of our lives. Learning is vital to life, and so a new phrase is coined: "Life Long Learning."

However in our society there is an aversion to training children and adults in all matters of faith. Let them decide. How does that work in life? How do you think it works in faith, it shows as more and more people are becoming and choosing not to be a part of the church and more and more are

falling away from the church. Could Solomon be right? Could the Lord be right?

From birth we are fallen creatures. We see evidence in life of how things don't work the way that they are supposed to. Children get sick, people die. Things break, relationships turn sour, marriages head for divorce. If left to our own devices, we can't find our way out of the mess that we have inherited and that we create for ourselves. The same holds true spiritually. All have sinned, we are by nature sinful and corrupt. Our hearts and lives are turned away from the Lord. Our only hope? Turning to Jesus.

Jesus is the Way, Truth, and Life, no one comes to the Father except through Him. He alone offers the remedy and answer to what ails us as sinful people, and He alone can fix the brokenness in our lives. This is the reason why Jesus came down from heaven, to be baptized for you in order to fulfill all righteousness. Christ came to make you right with the Father. Jesus always made good on the opportunity to fulfill the legal requirements of the Law for you. As a youth Jesus can be found in the Temple, learning and growing in the Word of God. As an adult, Jesus frequented the Temple and the synagogue, sharing the Good News that He was the long promised Messiah, who came to take away your sins by His life, suffering, death, and resurrection.

Jesus has called you to be His own in the waters of your Baptism. You belong to Him. You are a new creature and a new creation in Jesus! The Holy Spirit has been given to you, so that in faith you can live your life to the glory of God. And like anything, faith needs to be fed, continually fed.

We look in horror when we see malnourished and hungry children, who have had parents who have neglected their nourishment by feeding them. Sadly, many Christian children are malnourished and underfed as parents have neglected their God given responsibility to feed their souls with the Word of God by taking them to Sunday School and worship. Training for life not just means training for a child's physical welfare but spiritual as well.

And just as children are malnourished and underfed, so are many adult Christians, who neglect the reading and studying of the Word of God. Almost everyone today has a smartphone. When you first purchase the phone, it has a small charge where you can begin to use it. As you continue to use the phone, the battery slowly dies. So what do you do? You charge it regularly, repeatedly, religiously! You plug in the phone to charge it before you go to bed, you charge it when you travel in the car, when away from home from a time you will make certain your phone charger is with you so that your phone always has a charge. Why is that? You don't want to be caught short, you always want your phone to have a charge.

Sadly, many look after their phones and care for the battery life of their phone more than they take care of their spiritual life. Some Christians believe that they don't need to learn anymore about Jesus. It is as if once they have faith in Jesus, they believe that that faith doesn't need to grow and become stronger.

Nothing could be further from the truth! Each day we are challenged with so many questions, issues that face us and our families. We need God's guidance and help. And God offers it, in His Word. That is why the Psalmist writes that "your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path." God gives guidance and help in His Word. That is why it is important to take time out to study His Word. And that is why we offer the Bible studies that we do here at Redeemer, to give you an opportunity to bring your questions to the Lord, in a relaxed setting, so that we together can search the Word and listen to the answers God alone gives.

Now this is plain foolishness to many, in fact the Apostle Paul said as much in his first letter to the church at Corinth where he writes: "For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God." God's power is available to you in the Bible. Here in God's Word the Lord will give you all you need to live your life as His beloved child. For Jesus "Christ (is) the power of God and the wisdom of God. **25** For

the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. Jesus is the wisdom of God given to you, to make you wise unto salvation.

Since 1958 Redeemer Lutheran Church has been dedicated to training children in the Christian faith. First with a Christian Day School, and now with a preschool and early education ministries, our dedicated teachers and staff help us carry out our mission of proclaiming God's love in Christ for all. But this is only a part of our mission of training children. An equally important part of our ministry together is gathering together around the Word, in Sunday School and Adult Bible Class, to be fed and strengthened by our Lord for what He has for us to do.

So, dear brother and sister in Christ, we have much to learn, and God has much to teach us! As God's people, we have been chosen by the Lord to live lives being wise unto salvation, living as newborn babies, longing for the Word of God. So may God have His Way with us, to change us by His Word, for the purpose of accomplishing what God wants for us in our lives, all so that that we do we will do it to the glory of God and in Jesus' name.

Amen