

Preface

For more than a century, Charles Haddon Spurgeon's sermons have been consistently recognized, and their usefulness and impact have continued to the present day, even in the outdated English of the author's own day.

Why then should expositions already so successful and of such stature and proven usefulness require adaptation, revision, rewrite or even editing? The answer is obvious. To increase its usefulness to today's reader, the language in which it was originally written needs updating.

Though his sermons have served other generations well, just as they came from the pen of the author in the nineteenth century, they still could be lost to present and future generations, simply because, to them, the language is neither readily nor fully understandable.

My goal, however, has not been to reduce the original writing to the vernacular of our day. It is designed primarily for you who desire to read and study comfortably and at ease in the language of our time. Only obviously archaic terminology and passages obscured by expressions not totally familiar in our day have been revised. However, neither Spurgeon's meaning nor intent have been tampered with.

Tony Capoccia

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TEACHING CHILDREN

by

Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834-1892)

"Come, my children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the LORD."--Psalm 34:11

It is a noteworthy thing that good men frequently discover their duty when they are placed in most humiliating situations. Never in David's life was he in a worse dilemma than that situation which suggested this Psalm be written. It is, as you can read at the beginning, "A Psalm of David, when he faked insanity before Abimelech, who drove him away, and he left." David was carried before King Achish, the Abimelech of Philistia, and in order to make his escape, he pretended to be insane by acting in very degrading ways which easily gave the impression that he had certainly lost his mind. He was driven away from the palace, and as usual, when such

men are in the street, a number of children gather around him. Later, when he sang songs of praise to God, remembering how he had become the laughing-stock of little children, he seemed to say, "I have caused the future generations to think less of me because of my foolishness in the streets in front of the children; now I will endeavor to undo the mischief. Come, my children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the LORD."

It is very possible, that if David had never been in such a position, he would never have thought of this duty; for I do not discover in any other Psalm that David said, "Come, my children, listen to me." He had the worries of the cities and his nation pressing upon him, and he paid very little attention to the education of the youth; but here, being brought into the most difficult position which a man could possibly be in, acting the part of a man without reason, he remembers his responsibility. The exalted, or wealthy Christian, does not always remember their responsibility to the lambs.

Departing, however, from this thought, let me address myself to the text, "Come, my children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the LORD."

1. I shall give you one Doctrine
2. I shall give you two Encouragements
3. I shall give you three Admonitions
4. I shall give you four Instructions
5. I shall give you five Subjects for children

All of these will be taken from our text.

I. ONE DOCTRINE

"Come, my children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the LORD."

The doctrine is, that children are capable of being taught the fear of the Lord.

Men are generally wisest after they have been the most foolish. David had been extremely foolish, and now became extremely wise; and being so it was not likely that he would utter foolish sentiments, or give directions such as would be dictated by a weak mind.

We have heard it said by some that children cannot understand the great mysteries of religion. We even know some Sunday School teachers who cautiously avoid mentioning the great doctrines of the gospel, because they think the children are not prepared to receive them. The same mistake has crept into the pulpit, for it is currently believed, among a certain class of preachers, that many of the doctrines of the Word of God, although true, are not fit to be taught to the people, since they would misapply them to their own downfall. Away with such ideas, as this is one of the errors of the Roman Catholic Church.

Whatever my God has revealed must be preached. Whatever He has revealed, if I am not capable of understanding it, I will still

believe, and preach it. I do hold that there is no doctrine of the Word of God which a child, if he be capable of salvation, is not capable of receiving. I would have children taught all the great doctrines of truth without a solitary exception, that they may in later life hold firmly to them. I can bear witness that children can understand the Scriptures, for I am sure that when I was a child I could have discussed many a complicated point of controversial theology, having heard both sides of the question freely stated among my father's circle of friends. In fact, children are capable of understanding some things in early life, which we hardly understand in later years.

Children have a simplicity of faith. Simplicity is analogous to the highest knowledge; indeed, we are not aware that there little difference between the simplicity of a child and the genius of the profoundest mind. He who receives things simply, as a child, will often have ideas which the man who is prone to use deductive reasoning could never discover.

If you wish to know whether children can be taught, I point you to many in our churches, and in godly families--not geniuses, but the more common children--Timothys and Samuels, and little girls too, who have come to know a Savior's love. As soon as a child is capable of being damned it is capable of being saved. As soon as a child can sin, that child can, if God's grace helps it, believe and receive the Word of God. As soon as children can learn evil, be assured that they are capable, under the teaching of the Holy Spirit, to learn good.

Never go to your Sunday School class with the thought that the children cannot understand you; for if you do not make them understand, it is because you do not understand it yourselves; if you do not teach children what you wish, it is because you are not fit for the task: you should use simpler words more fitted for their capacity, and then you would discover that it was not the fault of the child, but the fault of the teacher, if he did not learn. I hold that children are capable of salvation. He who in divine sovereignty redeems the gray haired sinner from the error of his ways, can turn a little child from his youthful lusts. He who in the eleventh hour finds some standing idle in the marketplace, and sends them into the vineyard, can call men at the dawning of the day to work for Him.

He who can change the course of the river when it has rolled onward and become a mighty flood, can control a newborn river leaping from its cradle fountain, and make it run in the channel He desires. He can do all things; He can work on children's hearts as He pleases, for all of them are under His control.

I will not delay to establish the doctrine, because I do not consider any of you are so foolish as to doubt it. But although you believe it, I fear many of you don't expect to hear of children being saved. Throughout the churches I have noticed a kind of abhorrence of any thing like early childhood godliness. We are afraid of the idea of a little boy loving Christ; and if we hear of a little girl following the Savior, we say it is a youthful fancy, and early impression that will die away. My dear friends, I ask

you, never to treat the godliness of a young child with suspicion. It is a tender plant--don't brush it too hard.

I heard of a story some time ago, which I believe to be completely true. A dear little girl, some five or six years old, a true lover of Jesus, requested of her mother that she might join the church. The mother told her she was too young. The poor little thing was grieved exceedingly; and after a awhile the mother, who saw that godliness was in the little girl's heart, spoke to the minister on the subject. The minister talked to the child, and said to the mother, "I am thoroughly convinced of her salvation and godliness, but I cannot take her into the church, because she is too young." When the child heard that, a strange gloom passed over her face; and the next morning when her mother went to her little bed, she saw the little girl laying there with a pearly tear or two on each eye, dead because of her grief; her heart was broken, because she could not follow her Savior, and do as He had commanded her.

I would not have murdered that child for all the world! Take care how you treat young devotion to Christ. Treat it very tenderly. Believe that children can be saved as much as yourselves. When you see the young heart brought to the Savior, don't stand by and speak harshly, mistrusting everything. It is better sometimes to be deceived than to be the one who causes a young child to be ruined. May God send to his people a more firm belief that little buds of grace are worthy of all of our care.

II. TWO ENCOURAGEMENTS

Now, secondly, I will give you two encouragements, both of which you will find in the text.

The first is that of godly example. David said, "Come, my children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the LORD." You are not ashamed to walk in the footsteps of David, are you? You won't object to follow the example of one who was first notably holy, and then notably great. Shall the shepherd boy, the giant killer, the psalmist of Israel, and the king, walk in footsteps which you are too proud to follow? Ah! no; you will be happy, I am sure, to be as David was. If you want, however, a higher example, even than that of David, listen to the Son of David while from his lips the sweet words flow, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." I am sure it would encourage you if you always thought of these examples.

You teach children--you are not dishonored by it. Some say you are nothing but a Sunday School teacher, but you are a noble person, holding an honorable office, and having illustrious predecessors. We love to see persons of some standing in society take an interest in Sunday Schools. One great fault in many of our churches is that the children are left to the young people to take care of--the older members, who have more wisdom, take very little notice of them; and very often the wealthier members of the church stand aside as if the teaching of the poor were not (as indeed it is) the special business of the rich.

I hope for the day when the mighty men of Israel shall be found

helping in this great warfare against the enemy. In the United States we have heard of presidents, of judges, men of Congress, and persons in the highest positions--not condescending, for I hate to use such a term, but honoring themselves by teaching little children in Sunday School. He who teaches a class in Sunday School has earned a good degree. I had rather received the title of S.S.T., than M.A., B.A., or any other honor that ever was conferred. Let me beg of you then to take heart, because your duties are so honorable. Let the royal example of David, let the noble, the godly example of Jesus Christ inspire you with fresh diligence and increasing love, with confident and enduring perseverance, still to go on in your mighty work, saying, as David did, "Come, my children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the LORD."

The second encouragement I will give is the encouragement of great success. David said, "Come, my children, listen to me;" he did not add, "Perhaps I will teach you the fear of the Lord" but "I will teach you." He had success; or if he had not, others have. The success of Sunday Schools! If I begin to speak of that I will have an endless theme; therefore I will not begin. Many books might be written on it, and then when all were written, we might say, "I suppose that even the world itself could not contain all that might be written."

Up above where the starry hosts perpetually sing His high praise--up where the white-robed throng continually throw their crowns before His feet--we may behold the success of Sunday Schools. There, too, where voices of those taken home to heaven early in their young lives, gather Sunday after Sunday, to sing, "Gentle Jesus, meek and mild," we see with joy the success of Sunday Schools. And in almost every pulpit of our land, and there in the pews where the deacons sit, and godly members join in worship--there is the success of Sunday Schools.

And far across the broad ocean in the islands of the south, in lands where those live who bow down before blocks of wood and stone--there are missionaries saved by Sunday Schools, whose thousands, redeemed by their labors, contribute to swell the mighty stream of the tremendous, incalculable, I had almost said infinite success of Sunday School instruction. Go on! go on! So much has been done; more will be done. Let all your past victories inflame you with love; let the remembrance of campaigns of triumph, and of battlefields, won for your Savior in the realms of salvation and peace, be your encouragement for fresh duty.

III. THREE ADMONITIONS

Now, thirdly, I give you three admonitions.

The first is, remember who you are teaching. "Come, my children." I think we ought always to have respect to our audience, not that we need care that we are preaching to Mr. So-an-so, Sir William This, or My Lord That--because in God's sight that is a small matter; but we are to remember that we are preaching to men and women who have souls, so that we should not waste their time with things that are not worth their hearing. But when you teach in Sunday Schools, you are, if it be possible, in a more responsible situation even than a

minister.

He preaches to grownup people--men of judgment, who, if they do not like what he preaches, have the option of going somewhere else; you teach children who have no option to go elsewhere. If you teach the child wrongly, he believes you; if you teach him heresies he will receive them; what you teach him now, he will never forget. You are not sowing, as some say, on virgin soil, for it has long been occupied by the devil; but you are sowing on a soil more fertile than it ever will be--that will produce fruit now far better than it will do in the later years of its life; you are sowing on a young heart, and what you sow will be pretty sure to abide there, especially if you teach evil, for that will never be forgotten.

You are beginning with the child; take care what you do with him. Don't spoil him. Many a child has been treated like the Indian children, who have copper plates put upon their foreheads, so that they may never grow. There are many who know themselves to be simpletons now, just because those who had the care of them when young gave them no opportunities of getting knowledge, so that when they became old they cared nothing about it. Have a care what you are after; you are teaching children; mind what you are doing. Put poison in the spring, and it will impregnate the whole stream. Take care what you are after, sir! You are twisting the sapling, and the old oak will be therefore bent. Have a care! It is a child's soul you are tampering with, if you are tampering at all; it is a child's soul you are preparing for eternity, if God is with you. I give you a solemn admonition on every child's behalf. Surely, if it be treachery to administer poison to the dying, it must be far more criminal to give poison to the young life. If it be evil to mislead those who are gray headed, it must be far more so to turn aside the young heart to a road of error in which he may forever walk. Ah! it is a solemn admonition--you are teaching children.

The second is, remember that you are teaching for God. "Come, my children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord." If you, as teachers, were only assembled to teach geography, I am sure I should not interfere if you were to tell the children that the north pole was close to the equator; if you were to say that the extremity of South America lay right next to the coast of Europe; I would smile at your error, and perhaps should even retain it as a joke, if I heard you assure them that England was in the middle of Africa. But you are, not teaching geography or astronomy, nor are you teaching for business or for the world; but you are teaching them to the best of your ability for God.

You say to them, "Children, you come here to be taught the Word of God; you come here, if it is possible, that we may be the means of saving your souls." Have a care what you are after when you pretend to be teaching them for God. Wound the child's hand if you like, but, for God's sake, don't touch his heart. Say what you like about temporal matters, but I beg you, in spiritual matters, take care how you lead him. Oh! be careful that it is the truth which you convey, and only that. And now how solemn your work becomes! He who is doing a work for himself, let him do it as he likes; but he who in laboring for another, let him be careful how he does his work; he who is now employed by a governor, let him beware how he performs

his duty; but he who labors for God, let him tremble at the thought of doing careless work! Remember you are laboring for God. I say this, because you profess to be. I fear many, even among you, are far from having this view of the matter.

The third admonition is--remember that your children need teaching. The text implies that, when it says, "Come, my children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord." That makes your work all the more solemn. If children did not need teaching, I would not be so extremely anxious that you should teach them right; for works that are not necessary, men may do as they please. But here the work is necessary. Your child needs teaching! He was born in sin; in sin did his mother conceive him. He has an evil heart; he does not know God, and he never will unless he is taught. He is not like some ground of which we have heard, that has good seed lying hidden in its very heart; but, instead he has evil seed within his heart. God can place good seed there. You profess to be His instruments to scatter seed upon that child's heart; remember, if that seed is not sown, he will be lost forever, he life will be a life of alienation from God, and, at his death, everlasting fire will be his lot.

Be careful, then, how you teach, remembering the urgent necessity of the case. This is not a house on fire needing your assistance with a fire hose, nor is it an accident at sea, demanding your oar in the lifeboat, but it is a deathless spirit calling aloud to you, "Come over and help us." I beg you, teach "the fear of the Lord," and that only; be very anxious to say, and say truly, "I will teach you the fear of the Lord."

IV. That brings me, in the fourth place, to FOUR INSTRUCTIONS, and they are all in the text.

The first is--"Get the children to come to your school." "Come, my children." The great complaint with some is that they cannot get children. Go and get them to come. In London we are canvassing the city; that is a good idea, and you ought to canvass every village, and every town, and get every child you can; for David says, "Come, my children." My advice then, is, get the children to come, and do any thing to make it happen. Don't bribe them-- that is the only plan we object to; it is only adopted in Sunday Schools of the lowest order; Sunday Schools so bad that, even the fathers and mothers of the children have too much sense to send them there; but then farmer Brown won't employ the parents when they need work, or the local Judge will ignore their situations; or if the children don't go to the school on Sundays, they won't be allowed to attend grammar school during the week. Oh, that beggarly trick of bribing! I wish there were an end of it; it only shows the weakness and degradation, and abomination of a sect that cannot succeed without using so degrading a system. But, except that, don't be very particular how you get the children to school.

Why, if I could only get people to come to my place by preaching in a black coat, I would have on a tuxedo tomorrow. I would have a congregation somehow. Better to do strange things than have an empty chapel, or an empty school room. When I was in Scotland, we sent one of our workers around a village to secure an audience, and his efforts were eminently successful. Spare no means. Go and get

the children in. I have known ministers who have gone out in the streets on Sunday afternoon, and talked to the children who were playing in the street, so as to induce them to come to the school. This is what an earnest teacher will do. He will say, "Come to our school; you cannot believe what a nice school it is" Then he gets the children in, and, in his kind, winning manner, he tells them some stories and anecdotes about girls and boys, and so on. And in this way the school is filled. Go and catch them any way possible. There is no law against it. You may do what you like in battle. All is fair against the devil. My first instruction then is, get children, and get them any way possible.

The next is, "Get the children to love you," if you can. That also is in the text. "Come, my children, listen to me." You know how we used to be taught in our private schools, how we stood up with our hands behind us to repeat our lessons. That was not David's plan. "Come, my children--come here, and sit upon my knee." "Oh!" thinks the child, "how nice to have such a teacher! A teacher that will let me come near him, a teacher that does not say 'go' but 'come.'" The fault of many teachers is, that they do not let their children near them, but endeavor to foster a kind of awful respect. Before you can teach children you must get the silver key of kindness to unlock their hearts, and get their attention. Say, "Come, my children."

We have known some good men who are objects of abhorrence to children. You remember the story of two little boys who were one day asked if they would like to go to heaven, and who, much to their teacher's astonishment, said they really would not. When they were asked "why not," one of them said, "I would not like to go to heaven because grandpa would be there, and would be sure to say, 'get along boys, get along boys.' I would not like to be along with grandpa."

If a boy has a teacher who always wears a sour look, but who talks to him about Jesus, what does the boy think? "I wonder whether Jesus was like you; if He was, I wouldn't like Him very much." Then there is another teacher who, if he is provoked ever so little, spansks the child; and, at the same time, teaches him that he should forgive others, and how kind he ought to be. "Well," thinks the child, "that is no doubt the way to be, but my teacher does not show me how to do it." If you drive a boy from you, your power is gone, for you won't be able to teach him anything. It is a waste of time to attempt teaching those who do not love you. Try and make them love you, and then they will learn anything from you.

The next instruction is, "Get the children's attention." That is in the text. "Come, my children, listen to me." If they do not listen, you may talk, but you will waste your words. If they do not listen, you go through your labors as an unmeaning drudgery to yourselves and you scholars too. You can do nothing without securing their attention. "That is just what I cannot do," says one. Well, that depends upon yourself. If you give them something worth listening to, they will be sure to listen. Give them something worth hearing, and they will certainly listen. This rule may not be universal, but it is very nearly so. Don't forget to give them a few anecdotes. Anecdotes are very much objected to by critics of sermons, who say they ought not to be used in the pulpit.

But some of us know better than that; we know what will wake a congregation up; we can speak from experience, that a few anecdotes here and there are first rate things to get the attention of persons who won't listen to dry doctrine.

Try to learn as many short interesting stories, in the week before class, as possible. Wherever you go, if you are really a good teacher, you can always find something to make into a story to tell your children. Then, when your class gets dull, and you cannot get their attention, say to them, "Do you know the Five Bells?" and then they all open their eyes at once, if there is such a place in the village; or, "Do you know the turning against the Red Lion?" and then tell them something you may have read or heard just to secure their attention.

A dear child once said: "Father, I like to hear Mr. So-and-so preach, because he puts some 'likes' into his sermon--'like this, and like that.'" Yes, children always love those "likes." Make parables, pictures, figures, for them, and you will always get their attention. I am sure if I were a boy listening to some of you, unless you told me a story now and then, you would as often see the back of my head as my face; and I don't know, if I sat in a hot classroom, but that my head would nod, and I should go to sleep, or be playing with Tom on my left, and do as many strange things as the rest, if you did not strive to interest me. Remember to make them listen.

The fourth admonition is, "Care about what you teach the children." "Come, my children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord." Not to weary you, however, I only hint at that, and pass on.

V. In the fifth place, to give you FIVE SUNDAY-SCHOOL LESSONS--five subjects to teach your children--and these you will find in the verses following the text:

1. "Come, my children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord." The first thing to teach is "morality." "Whoever of you loves life and desires to see many good days, keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking lies. Turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it."

2. The second is "godliness, and a constant belief in God's oversight." "The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their cry."

3. The third thing is "the evil of sin:" "The face of the LORD is against those who do evil, to cut off the memory of them from the earth. The righteous cry out, and the LORD hears them; he delivers them from all their troubles."

4. The fourth thing is, "the necessity of a broken heart:" "The LORD is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit."

5. The fifth thing is "the inestimable blessedness of being a child of God:" "A righteous man may have many troubles, but the LORD delivers him from them all; he protects all his bones, not one of

them will be broken. The LORD redeems his servants; no one will be condemned who takes refuge in Him."

I have given you these divisions, and now let me refer to them one by one. Here, then, is a model lesson for you: "Come, my children, listen to me: I will teach you the fear of the Lord." David begins with a question, "Who of you loves life and desires to see many good days?" The children like that thought; they would like to live to be old. With this introduction he begins and teaches them morality: "Keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking lies. Turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it."

Now, we never teach morality as the way of salvation. God forbid that we should ever mix up man's works in any way with the road to heaven; "For it is by grace we have been saved, through faith--and this not from ourselves, it is the gift of God." But yet we teach morality, while we teach spirituality; and I have always found that the gospel produces the best morality in all the world. I would have the Sunday School teacher take care of the morals of the boys and girls, speaking to them very particularly of those sins which are most common to youth. He may honestly and conveniently say many things to his children which no one else can say, especially when reminding them of the sin of lying, so common with children; the sin of little petty thefts, of disobedience to parents, of breaking the Sabbath day. I would have the teacher be very particular in mentioning these things, one by one; for it is of little help talking to them about sins in the mass: you must take them one by one, just as David did.

First look after the tongue: "Keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking lies." Then look after the whole conduct: "Turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it." If the child's soul is not saved by other parts of the teaching, this part may have a beneficial effect upon his life; and so far so good. Morality, however, is comparatively a small thing.

The best part of what you teach is "godliness," a constant belief in God--I said, not religion, but godliness. Many people are religions without being godly. Many have all the externals of godliness, all the outside of piety--such men we call religious--but they have no thought about God. They think about their place of worship, their Sunday, their books, but nothing about God; and he who does not respect God, pray to God, love God, is an ungodly man with all his external religion, however good that may be. Labor to teach the child always to have an eye to God; write on his brow, "You, God, see me;" stamp on his books, "You, God, see me;" beg him to remember that,

"Within the embracing arms of God
He forever will dwell;"

that the arms of Jehovah encompass him around while his every act and thought is under the eye of God. No Sunday School teacher discharges his duty unless he constantly lays stress upon the fact that there is a God who notices everything. Oh! that we were more godly ourselves, that we more of godliness, and that we loved it better!

The third lesson is--"the evil of sin." If the child does not learn that, he will never learn the way to heaven. None of us ever knew what a Saviour Christ was till we knew what an evil thing sin was. If the Holy Spirit does not teach us "the exceeding sinfulness of sin," we shall never know the blessedness of salvation. Let us ask for His grace, then, we may forever be able to fight against the abominable nature of sin. "The face of the LORD is against those who do evil, to cut off the memory of them from the earth." Don't spare your child; let him know what sin leads to; don't, like some people, be afraid of speaking the consequences of sin clearly and unbiased.

I have heard of a father, one of whose sons, a very ungodly young man, died suddenly. He did not, as some would do, say to his family: "We hope your brother has gone to heaven." No; but, overcoming his natural feelings, he was enabled, by divine grace, to gather the older children, and say: "My sons and daughters, your brother is dead; I fear he is in hell; you knew his life and conduct, you saw how he behaved: God snatched him away." Then he solemnly warned them of the place to which he believed, and almost knew he had gone, begging them to avoid it; and then he was the means of bringing them to serious thought. But had he acted, as some would have done, with tenderness of heart, but not with honesty of purpose, and said he hoped his son had gone to heaven, what would the others have said? "If he is gone to heaven, there is no need for us to fear, we may live as we like."

No, no; I hold that it is not unchristian to say of some men that they are gone to hell, when we have seen that their lives have been hellish lives. But it is said: "Can you judge your fellow creatures?" No, but I can "know" them by their fruits; I do not judge them or condemn them; they judge themselves. I have seen their sins go before them to judgment, and I do not doubt that they shall follow after. "But couldn't they have been saved at the eleventh hour?" I do not know that they can. I have heard of one who was, but I do not know that there ever was another, and I cannot tell that there ever will be. Be honest then, with your children, and teach them, by the help of God, that evil will kill the wicked.

But you will not have done half enough unless you teach carefully the fourth point--"the absolute necessity of a change of heart." Oh, may God enable us to keep this constantly before the minds of the children--that there must be a broken heart and a repentant spirit, that good works will be of no use unless there be a new nature, that the most laborious duties, and the most earnest prayers will all be nothing, unless there be a true and thorough repentance of sin, and an entire forsaking of it through the mercy of God. Ah! you be sure, whatever you leave out, that you tell them of the three Rs, Ruin, Regeneration, and Redemption. Tell them that they are ruined by the fall, and that if they are redeemed by Christ they never can know it until they are regenerated by the Spirit. Keep before them these things; and then you will have the pleasing task of telling them.

In the fifth place, the "joy and blessedness of being a Christian." Well, I need not tell you how to talk about that, for if you know

what it is to be a Christian you will never be short of words. Ah! beloved, when we get on this subject, our mind loves to speak, for it goes crazy with joy, and frolics in its bliss. Oh! truly was it said: "Blessed is the man whose sin is forgiven, and whose sin is pardoned." Truly was it said: "But blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, whose confidence is in Him." Always stress this point, that the righteous are a blessed people--that God's chosen family, redeemed by blood and saved by power, are a blessed people here below, and will be a blessed people above. Let your children see that you are blessed. If they know you are in trouble, come with a smiling face, if it be possible, so that they may say: "Our teacher is a blessed man, although he is bowed down with his troubles." Always seek to keep a joyous face that they may know religion to be a blessed thing; and let this be one main point of your teaching, "A righteous man may have many troubles, but the LORD delivers him from them all; He protects all his bones, not one of them will be broken. The LORD redeems His servants; no one will be condemned who takes refuge in Him."

Thus I have given you these five lessons; and now, in conclusion, let me solemnly say, with all the instruction you may give to your children, you must be deeply conscious that you are not capable of doing any thing in the child's salvation, but that it is God Himself who from the first to the last must effect it all. You are a pen; God may write with you, but you can not write yourself. You are a sword; God may with you slay the child's sin, but you cannot slay it yourself. Therefore be always mindful of this, that you must first be taught of God yourself, and then you must ask God to teach, for unless a higher teacher than you instruct the child, that child must perish. It is not all your instruction that saves his soul: it is the blessing of God resting on it.

May God bless your labors! He will do it if you are instant in prayer, constant in supplication; for never yet did the earnest preacher or teacher, labor in vain, and never yet has it been found that the bread cast upon the water has been lost.

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C.H.Spurgeon on Ps34:11, on ministry to
CHILDREN.