

7. Learning to Bring Glory to Christ

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to glory in the new covenant. We saw that the Holy Spirit gives us liberty. That liberty gives us the freedom to serve others with the love of Christ. That liberty also makes it possible for us to be transformed in our lives so that our lives begin to reflect the glory of Christ. Today, we are going to build on that topic to see how we help our children learn to bring glory to Christ.

In 2 Corinthians 4:1, we read, “Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we do not lose heart.” Paul knew that he had received the mercy of God because he had been a persecutor of Christians before he became a Christian. However, we realize that every person who has become a Christian has received the mercy of God. As a result of the fact that we have received mercy, we also want to carry out the ministry that the Lord has given to us. When we go through trials or difficult times, we want to remind ourselves of the words in 1 Peter 1:7-9, “That the genuineness of your faith, *being* much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see *Him*, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith--the salvation of *your* souls.” Here, we see that we can rejoice with a joy that is inexpressible even in the middle of trials.

Just as Paul said of his own life, we do not want our children to lose heart when they go through trials. Galatians 6:9-10 says, “And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.” Instead of losing heart and becoming exhausted, we want to show our children that we want to look for opportunities to do good to others. The Lord has promised us that we will reap a reward if we do good instead of losing heart.

In order to be effective and bring glory to God, we follow the example of Paul in 2 Corinthians 4:2. That verse says, “But we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.” The word “renounce” means *to give up or put away*. First, we see that if we want to bring glory to God that we will give up the hidden things of shame. Hebrews 12:2 says, “Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of *our* faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.” Christ was willing to take our shame as he hung on the cross for us. As a result, He gives us the strength to give up the sins that will bring shame to our own lives. We want to give our children an example to follow by giving up such things.

Second, if we want to bring glory to God we will not walk in craftiness. The word that is translated “craftiness” means *to deceive others or to teach a false wisdom*. Ephesians 4:14 says, “That we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting.” Here, we see that false teachers try to deceive weak Christians with their false teaching and worldly wisdom. If we are going to bring glory to God, we will help our children to learn the wisdom of God. In this way, we provide

an example and we also equip them to share the wisdom of God with others.

Third, if we want to bring glory to God, we will not handle the Word of God deceitfully. The word that is translated “handle deceitfully” means *to corrupt or to tamper with*. The Jewish false teachers that were trying to deceive the new Christians during the development of the early church were trying to teach the Gentiles that they had to follow the Jewish law in order to be saved. They were corrupting the Word of God by their false teaching. We want to provide an example for our children by accurately explaining the Word of God to them so that they will not be deceived or try to deceive others.

Fourth, if we want to bring glory to God, we will clearly reveal the truth of the Word of God. Ephesians 4:15 says, “But, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ.” In order to clearly reveal the truth of the Word of God, we see that we are to do two things. We are to speak the truth and we are to speak the truth in love. We are either driven by the fear of man or we are led by the love of Christ. If we are controlled by fear as we speak the Word of God, we may twist the meaning of the Word of God because of our fear of people. In contrast, if we speak the Word of God in love, we will seek to speak it in a way that will be both accurate and done with love. That kind of speaking the Word will bring glory to God.

Not everyone will understand even when we speak the Word of God accurately and in love. 2 Corinthians 4:3-4 says, “But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.” In our last topic, we saw that Paul said the Jews had a veil on their hearts so that they did not understand that the Old Testament spoke about Christ. Here, we see that all people that have not placed their faith in Christ have their minds veiled. 1 Corinthians 2:14 says, “But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned.” Here, we see that the person without Christ cannot understand the Word of God because they do not have the Holy Spirit to give them understanding.

We also see in these verses that the god of this age has blinded those who do not believe the gospel. The god of this age is Satan. He does everything possible to keep people in spiritual darkness. That is why Matthew 5:16 tells us, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.” We are to help our children see how to let our light shine through our good works. At the same time, we are also to pray and ask God to draw people to Christ. In John 6:44, Christ said, “No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.” We need to realize that it is the Father that draws people to Christ and pray that the Father will work in their lives.

In Hebrews 1:2-3, we read that God, “Has in these last days spoken to us by *His* Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of *His* glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.” Here, we see that Christ is the express image of the Father. He is also the One who upholds

all things by the Word of His power.

As we go on to 2 Corinthians 4:5-6 we read, “For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus' sake. For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to *give* the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” Here, we see another key lesson to model by our example if we want to show our children how to bring glory to Christ. Paul and Timothy did not preach about themselves. They did not boast about what they had done. Instead, they preached and taught that Christ Jesus is Lord. In the same way, we provide an example for our children as we continue to preach and teach that Jesus Christ is Lord.

As Paul and Timothy said, we need to be an example of the fact that we are bondservants for Jesus' sake. The word that is translated “bondservants” means *one who gives up himself to the will of another*. Christ is our example of what it means to be a bondservant. Christ said in John 6:38, “For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.” As we choose to be bondservants of Christ, we are choosing to do His will instead of our own.

God is the One who gave the command that created physical light. Genesis 1:3 says, “Then God said, ‘Let there be light’; and there was light.” Here, we see that God is also the One who gives spiritual light. In Colossians 1:12-13, we read, “Giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed *us* into the kingdom of the Son of His love.” God is the One who made it possible for us to become saints who are in the light. He did this by delivering us from the power of darkness. God caused that light to shine out of darkness and caused us to come to that light.

The light that God has given to us as Christians when He caused the light to shine into our hearts is the light of the knowledge of the glory of God. In 1 John 1:6-7, we read, “If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.” Here, we see that those who walk in darkness do not have the light yet. In contrast, as we learn to walk in the light we have fellowship both with God and with one another. We want to show our physical and spiritual children how to bring glory to God by walking in the light. As they see our example, they will grow in their own understanding of the fact that God has shown His light into our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God. We are now able to reflect that light and bring glory to God. May the Lord richly bless you as you show your children how to bring glory to God in their lives.