

Sermon

Pentecost 2

June 17, 2017

Text: Psalm 78:1-7 **My people, hear my teaching; listen to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth with a parable; I will utter hidden things, things from of old— things we have heard and known, things our ancestors have told us. We will not hide them from their descendants; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD, his power, and the wonders he has done. He decreed statutes for Jacob and established the law in Israel, which he commanded our ancestors to teach their children, so the next generation would know them, even the children yet to be born, and they in turn would tell their children. Then they would put their trust in God and would not forget his deeds but would keep his commands.**

Dear Fellow Teachers: You may think it strange that I address you as fellow teachers. But everyone here today, from the youngest to the oldest is a teacher. Please recall that actions as well as words say something. The new-born babe tells about God's greatness; a small babe also gives evidence of original sin, demanding to be the center of attention from the first hour of birth. You aged seniors, even you who might be confined to a wheel chair, still teach lessons. The most important is that in life and when facing death, your Lord is first. You, who are between infancy and old age, are the ones who do a great amount of teaching. The lessons you teach are also of the highest importance, life or death can depend on them. Heaven or hell can depend on your teachings which you do by word and action

All this leads us to the word for today, the first seven verses of Psalm 78. In this Psalm, we see we are to **TEACH THE NEXT GENERATION ABOUT THEIR LORD**. The word says, **"we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD"**. GOD EXPECTS US TO DO THIS. IT IS ESSENTIAL WE TEACH THEM THE PRAISEWORTHY DEEDS OF THE LORD. IF WE DON'T, HOW WILL THE NEXT GENERATION KNOW THE LORD? HOW WILL THEY KNOW WHAT GOD EXPECTS OF THEM? HOW WILL THEY KNOW THAT GOD HAS FORGIVEN THEM ALL THEIR SINS? IF THEY DON'T LEARN THESE THINGS, THEY WILL BE UNDER GOD'S CURSE. REMEMBER WHAT MOSES SAID TO THE PEOPLE THAT THEY WOULD BE CURSED IF THEY TURNED FROM THE LORD. (DEUT 11:28) AND IF OUR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN DO NOT LEARN ABOUT THE LORD, HOW CAN THEY FOLLOW HIM AND BE BLESSED? ---HOW IS IT THAT YOU KNOW THE LORD? IN VERSE TWO IT SAYS: **"I will utter hidden things, things from of old— things we have heard and known, things our ancestors have told us."** You know the Lord because you were taught; you were told the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord. And so just as you were taught, you are now to teach the next generation. This is true

whether you have children of your own or not. What you say and do can and will influence the next generation. ---Finally, isn't this what Jesus did? It says in verse 2, **"I will open my mouth with a parable; I will utter hidden things, things from of old."** Didn't Jesus speak in parables? Didn't he reveal to his students, the disciples, the mysteries of God, the truths that previously were not understood? You and I thus have the responsibility to teach the next generation about their Lord. Likewise, let us remember that we teach with our actions as well as our words. Your attending church faithfully shows the next generation your trust in the Lord as well as your words.

But what are we to teach the next generation? In verse 5 it tells us: **"He decreed statutes for Jacob and established the law in Israel, which he commanded our ancestors to teach their children."** We are to teach the laws of God to the next generation. The next generation needs to learn that the Law shows us our sin. A two-year-old rebels and says "no". A five-year-old tells lies. By 15 a youth has broken every commandment. The Law also shows us the consequence of sin, the shame it brings and its destructive power. The Law also teaches us the path in which God would have us walk. Do you remember how you had to memorize the 10 Commandments? "You shall have no other gods." "You shall not murder." You also learned the conclusion to the 10 Commandments. The Lord say he is a jealous God who will punish the sins of the fathers upon the children to third and fourth generation of those that hate him. And what happened to the Israelites when they disobeyed God? He punished them. Of all the people who left Egypt, only two entered the promised land of Israel. ---Our children and their children need to know that sin separates them from God and brings God's wrath down on them. Today's world wants to deny all this. Yet you know, for God has taught you, that this all true. Furthermore, you have experienced the shame of your sins and at times significant consequences for your sins. You know and can teach that there is nothing we can do on our own to remove our sins and the hurt they have caused. All this is of vital importance, so we need to teach it to the next generation. Remember our children need to all this truth concerning their sin, otherwise they will see no need for a Savior.

When these others we teach clearly understand their sin and the doom it brings, we also want to teach them of God's grace and forgiveness. In verse 4 it says, **"we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD, his power, and the wonders he has done."** Our Lord has done many praiseworthy deeds. Just look at his creation of all things, the glorious heavens and the vast

seas, the majestic mountains, and the grassy plains. But the most praiseworthy deed work of the Lord is the sending of his own Son to be our Savior.

Our words and actions need to teach a contradiction that is a truth. God condemns sin. God forgives sin. This is contrary to human reason. But when a person understands his sins have left him condemned and hopeless on his own, he learns God can alone can help him. --- We tell them of God's love. We give them examples of this love as it is seen in Jesus. He heals the sick, including incurable diseases such as leprosy. He listens to and helps the poor and the outcasts. He comforts and helps those who are hurting. But above all, he forgives sinners their sins. He does this to individuals who come to him like Zacchaeus. But above all he dies on the cross to pay for all the sins of everyone. Jesus himself makes the promise that if we will trust in him, we have the forgiveness of sins. **"He that believes and is baptized shall be saved."** The actions and words of Jesus create faith in the hearer. Since Jesus is the very Son of God, all he does and says has authority here on earth and in heaven. He is trustworthy and that is why we come to put our faith in him.

The Holy Spirit aids you in your teaching. You need to know that when you talk to your children, family, friends, others about Jesus, it is the H.S. who will work his good pleasure in the hearer. Sometimes people reject the Holy Spirit's word, we pastors see this quite often. But he also works faith in many. He calls people to faith through the Gospel story of Jesus. Also, the Holy Spirit through Baptism and Word of God aids you greatly in raising your children. He also is present, guiding us in our daily Christian life. He helps us to be the salt of the earth in our words and actions. For this reason, we encourage each other to read our Bibles. We set an example again by our own Bible reading and devotions.

God also want us to tell others to pray. We teach our children to pray at meals and at bedtime and again when they wake up. We set examples praying with them at meals and bedtime. When we eat at restaurants, we still pray. Especially, above all we pray that Holy Spirit will keep us and our loved ones in him in life and in death.

Finally, we model living faith in our actions and words. Nothing, other than the Word of God, can bear witness like you and I to serve the Lord willingly. No grumbling, no complaining, remaining content in the Lord. Working at church, helping others, knowing it is a privilege to be called a Child of God.

You are teachers under God. It is an awesome privilege. It is a serious responsibility. But God, your heavenly Father has given you this work in his

kingdom. This is because he delights in you. He wants to show you to be a blessing to others by teaching them in word and example. Amen