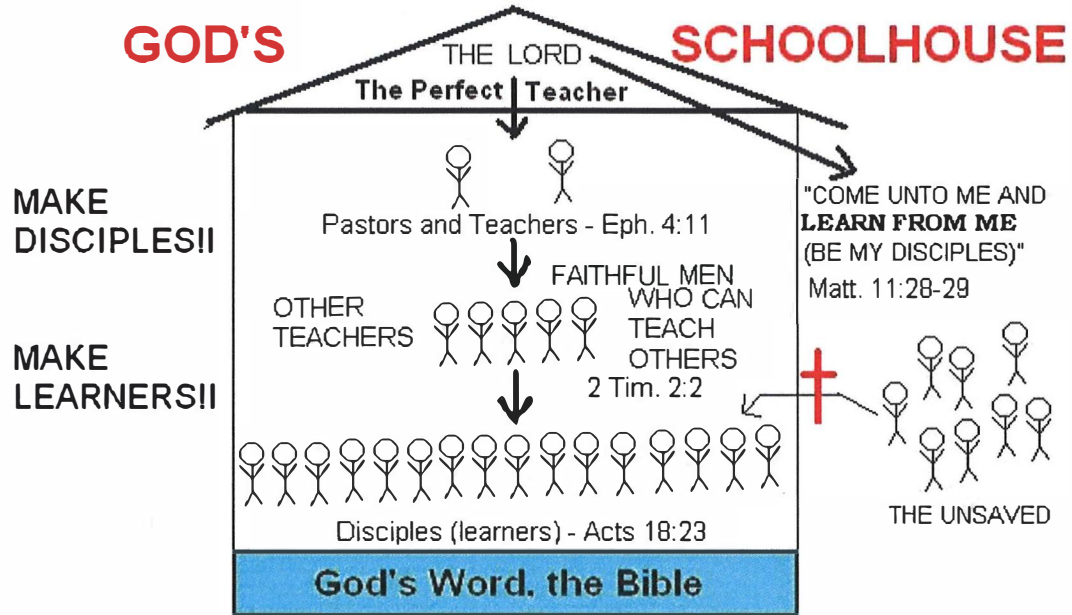


CHAPTER 13

School – Learning to be a Learner

In every school there are those who teach (**teachers**) and there are those who learn (**students, pupils**). In the New Testament we find the word "**disciple**." This word means "one who learns, a student, a pupil."

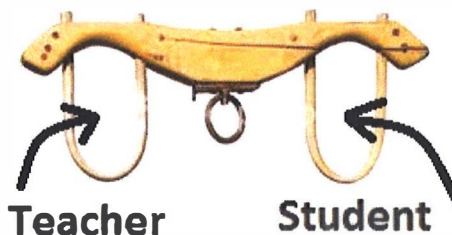


In Matthew 10:1-4 we find the names of 12 **disciples**. Who do you think their **Teacher** was?

In Matthew 11:29 the Lord Jesus **invites** us to become **His disciples (learners)**: "Take my yoke upon you, and _____ of (from) Me." Have you accepted this invitation? Jesus is saying, "I want to be your **Teacher** and I want you to be My disciple. I want you to **get your learning from Me!**" Those who have accepted this invitation are called "D_____ (learners, students) of the L_____" (Acts 9:1).

A **yoke** is a wooden frame which fastens two work animals together. Just as two oxen are joined together by a yoke, so also a **teacher** and a **disciple** (student) need to be joined together. The **teacher** would say: "I want you to be **yoked up** with me, and as we are joined together I will teach you and you will learn from me."

Jesus said, "Take My Y_____ upon you and
 L _____ of (from) Me" (Matthew 11:29).



School — Then and Now

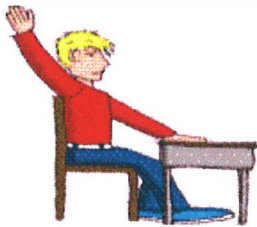
The word "**school**" comes from a Greek word (**scholē**) which means "leisure." A **school** was where people could go in their free time or in their leisure time (when they did not have any work or other duties to do) to learn. Today everyone goes to school but this was not always so. Long ago very few people went to school because they were too busy with other things and did not have any "leisure time" for school. If a person wanted to learn a trade he would become an **apprentice**. This means that those who knew a trade would teach someone else how to do the trade. For example, if you wanted to become a carpenter you would go to live and work with a carpenter (either your father or someone else) and he would teach you how to work with wood. Most people were too busy to go to school (they had work to do, chores on the farm, etc.). A wealthy person or a person with wealthy parents might be able to go to school, but many others could not.

Today in our country all children are required to go to school. Every boy and girl has a wonderful opportunity to learn and to increase in knowledge. Have you thanked God for your school? For your teachers? For the things you have been learning?

We are all Different

Teachers are not all the same. Every teacher is different. Have you found this to be true? In what ways are they different?

Students are not all the same either. Every student is different from every other student. You are different from the other students in your class and you are all different from each other. Let's look at one student:



- Consider all that this person has been, now is, hopes to be.
- Consider how this person feels about himself.
- Consider this person's skills, state of health, ability to know and learn, rate of growth, faith in God (or lack of faith), trust in others.

**Student Sitting
at His Desk**

**every person is different!
Every student is different!**

Each person must do his own learning. Someone else cannot learn for you or learn in your place. Suppose you said to your friend, "I'm sick today and will not be able to go to school. I want you to go and learn for me." Could your friend really do this for you? That would be like telling your friend to go to a restaurant and eat for you! Can your teacher learn for you? Can your parents learn for you? **If a young person does not learn**, whom should he (or she) blame?

Each person must do his own learning but others can be a **real help** in the learning process. Your teacher cannot learn for you, but can your teacher help you to learn? _____ Your parents cannot learn for you, but can your parents help you to learn? _____

What Should We Do?

As we begin each new school day, what should we do? Here are some important suggestions:

1. Get a good night's rest. It's hard to learn when the mind and body are tired.

2. Have a good breakfast. Breakfast is a very important meal. You have gone without food all night long and your body needs good nourishment as you begin a new day.
3. Give a loving "**Good-bye**" to your parents and to your family. You are leaving and later you will be coming **home** (your home is a base of operations from which to tackle the day—the schoolroom, the playground, the bus, etc.).

As a person you have a natural **urge** to grow and to develop new skills and to learn about the world you live in. Encourage this **desire**! Get excited about math and reading and writing and spelling and science and all of your other subjects. **Work now as you prepare for a widening world. If you work now then it will be easier to settle down to serious work later in your life.** If you learn to work now when you are young, it will help you to work when you are older.

The Desire to Know and Learn

The more we learn, the more we want to know and learn. There is so much to learn and to know, and we will never stop learning. Read Psalm 8:3. According to this verse, what did David want to consider and learn about?

_____ Once a little girl looked up at the Big Dipper and the Milky Way and said, "What I wonder is how can there be so much to wonder about." God has made a whole universe full of wonderful and amazing things. Think of all the wonders there are just on this planet (see Psalm 8:7-8)!

How to Learn

We learn by **thinking**

by **asking questions**

by **listening** and

by **reading.**

This is how we learn about God. We listen to God by reading His Word and we talk to God when we pray. If a person never listens to God and never reads God's Word and never prays, then this person will not know very much about God!

Do you talk with your family and with your parents? Why not try it! Say something like this: "**Dad/Mom**, I would like to just talk to you about anything or everything. Okay? What was it like for you when you were my age? etc." It really helps to talk. **Try it!**

We need to make sure that we rest and relax also (see Chapter 10 in these notes). Sometimes when we are trying to learn there are things that we do not understand or things that seem too hard for us or too much for us. We need to learn to rest. We must not be afraid or worry or get angry. We only can do **what we can do** and God **must do** (and will do) what He wills to do for us, in us and about us. God's desire and purpose for us is this is threefold:

1. that we would be saved (1 Timothy 2:4).
2. that we would be "**believing believers**," always trusting Him (Mark 5:36).
3. that God's purpose and plan for our lives should be fulfilled, to be more like His Son (Romans 8:28-29).

If your parents do not encourage you to study and read and learn, perhaps you can encourage them by your example. Show them that you really want to learn and understand, and this will help them. Their example is important to you and your example is important to them. The Lord Jesus Christ is our **perfect example**. The Bible tells us that as a young man Jesus "increased in W _____ and stature and in favour with God and man" (Luke 2:52). Jesus was an example even to those who were much older (see Luke 2:46-47).

Your studies and your school work are important. Be looking to God to help you and be thankful that He will. **He is very, very interested in you**. Do you ever pray for God's help before you go to school? on the way to school? while in school? on the playground?

Choosing What is Right

Be looking to God to help you know the difference between right and wrong, good and bad. **Choose the good and reject the bad** (say "No" in your heart). The Bible says, "D _____ from evil and do G _____" (Psalm 37:27). "**Abhor** (hate) that which is E _____; **cleave to** (don't let go of) that which is G _____" (Romans 12:9).

Remember that your classmates only work with what they **know**. If they know little about that which is **good** then there will be a lot of that which is **bad**. They will show that which is **bad** in what they say, in what they think, in how they act and in what they do.

Would you be disappointed if you squeezed an orange and orange juice came out? _____
 Why not? What if tomato juice came out of an orange. Would this surprise you? _____
 Why? So also you should not expect the good that God can do for the believer to come out of an unbeliever. What should we expect out of a good tree (Matthew 7:17)?
 _____ What should we expect out of a corrupt tree (Matthew 7:17)? _____

Don't **forget** or **give up** your **advantage** as a child of God (one who has trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ--John 1:12). If you know the right answer to a question, do not give the wrong answer just because others do not know the right answer. If everyone else in the class believes that man evolved from apes, should you say this too even though you know that God created man from the dust of the ground (Genesis 2:7)? _____

Even if everyone else is saying the wrong words and doing the wrong kinds of things, does this mean that you should join them in doing wrong? _____ Why or why not?

Getting Help From Others

Don't forget to ask questions when you do not understand. You need to ask questions to find out the reasons **why** you should be speaking and acting differently. There is no such thing as a stupid question. It is not stupid to ask questions. The ones who find answers are the ones who ask questions. When you have a problem with understanding something, find out what the problem is and look to the Lord God to help you solve it. **Ask for help. It is good and right to do so.**

Don't forget to get help **right away** if you have a seeing problem (something wrong with your **eyes**) or a hearing problem (something wrong with your **ears**) or any other kind of problem. **The earlier that you find things the easier it is to fix them.**

Trust **in the Lord** as you tell your concerns to your parents, your doctor, your Sunday School teacher, your pastor or to others who can help. Tell people who **care** and who **understand** and who can **really be of help**. Your friends probably cannot be of real help. Why is this so? Why would an older person be of more help? Suppose you broke your finger in gym class. Would you rather have a friend (classmate) take care of this or a doctor?

Be patient with yourself and with others. Each person learns at different times and in different ways. One person finds math easier than English and another person finds English easier than math. What subjects do you find easy to understand? What subjects do you find difficult to understand? Remember to keep trying, and to keep learning even what is hard. What is hard to do today is easier to do tomorrow if you keep studying and working at it and practicing it.

Tests and Grades

Tests are given to see what you **know**. Tests do not always show what you learned. Remember, a **parrot** can repeat things, but a parrot does not really learn. You might be able to repeat things for a test, but does this mean that you have really learned these things? How would you do if the same test were given two months later?

Tests **do not** tell all and are **not** the final indicator of how well a person is doing.

It is better to take the subject again and even the grade again than to go on to the next subject or grade without being ready for it. What you learn today is necessary for what you will be learning tomorrow. Would a person be ready to play basketball if he (or she) does not know how to dribble the ball? Don't try to play basketball until you have first learned how to dribble! **Learn the first thing before going on to the next thing:**



WAIT A MINUTE! I'M GOING TO DO THIS AGAIN TO GET IT RIGHT AND TO MAKE IT EASIER!

Ask for help. Even though you want to be with your friends as they go up to the next grade, don't let this stop you from staying and learning what you need to know. Don't worry--**you will catch up with them!** If you stay in the same grade for more than one year, do you need to feel badly about this? Why? Why not? If there is someone in your class that has stayed back, should you look down on him? What should your attitude be towards him (or her)?

Learning by Repeating

We learn by repeating (letting something go through our mind **again and again**). The same is true as we learn God's Word the Bible. We read the Bible **again and again** until we know more and more and see more and more. We do not say, "**I already read John 3:16 and I never need to read it again!**" No, each time we read this wonderful verse God can help us to understand it better. No understanding or little understanding means that it has little value to me. John 3:16 may have little value to those who have only read it once or twice. It means much more to those who have read it hundreds of times.

If I cannot multiply six times six, then I must try to find the answer by adding: $6 + 6 + 6 + 6 + 6 + 6$. If I cannot add, then I can count on my fingers and toes. If I cannot count on my fingers or toes (or if I run out of fingers and toes), then what can I do?

Remember, girls may develop more quickly than boys, especially in school and learning skills. It may be easier for them to read and write. Also some small muscles (those muscles used in writing and in arts and crafts) often develop earlier in girls than in boys. God has made the differences in His wisdom and for our good and for His glory: **He made them**

"M_____ and F_____ " (Genesis 1:27).

As time goes on, things will even out and balance out. So **boys**, don't say this: "**School is for sissies and the athletic field is for real men.**" No, school is for boys too and some girls can be quite athletic.

Things to Remember

Remember to share with your parents what goes on at school and what you are learning in class. It is important that you work together as a **team**. If you are having problems, do not be afraid to talk to your parents about what is bothering you.

Remember that teachers are **not perfect persons**. They are imperfect like you are. At times they may get angry, worried, sick, etc. They may even do things and say things that are wrong. Pray for them to know the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour and be a good witness (testimony) to them and to your classmates. Who was a good witness (testimony) before Pontius Pilate (1 Timothy 6:13)?

Remember that teachers are different and they do things differently. Some teachers are very strict and some teachers are not so strict. Some teachers are very good and some are not very good. Pray for their salvation. Be a good example before them.

Remember that students are different and some have special needs. Some are slower at learning, some are bad tempered, some have speech problems, some have ear and eye problems, some are heavy and some are thin, etc. Try to get along with them and be helpful to all as much as possible. Ask God to help you to do this. **Not all those in your class will be concerned about you** (see the last chapter on "Friends and Foes"), **but you can be concerned about them**.

Remember, homework is your work at home. Work at it and work on it. Develop good habits and learn well. Be **diligent** (not lazy) and **study** in such a way that the Lord will be pleased: "S_____ to show thyself approved unto _____, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed" (2 Timothy 2:15). If you were told to wash the dishes and you went and did a sloppy job so that most of the dishes still had some food on them, you would be a workman who would need to be **ashamed!** The same is true when we do our school work in a fast and sloppy way. The Apostle Paul wanted to please the Lord whether he was **home** (present with the Lord) or **away from home** (absent from the Lord and still in his body) — see 2 Corinthians 5:8-9. The Philippian believers obeyed and did what was right when Paul was present with them and when Paul was not present with them (Philippians 2:12). They did not just act well when Paul was there but they acted well even when he was not there (when he was absent). What about you? Do you work hard even when your teacher is not in the room? When you are doing your homework, do you work well even when your parents are not right beside you? Remember whether you are in school or out of school, **it is always time to learn**. Never stop learning! Never stop using your mind in a good and healthy way!