Sunday School Rally Day
West Henrietta - 1960
Rolling Meadows - 1963

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IN NOMINE JESU

Joshua 24: 14,15 Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve Him in sincerity and in truth; and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the Lord. And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

EDUCATING FOR ETERNITY

In a day in which atheistic communism is spending $20.00 to stamp out the Name of Christ to our $1.00 to proclaim His holy Name, it seems to me that the matter of Christian education ought to be of vital concern to each of us. 20 to 1 is the ratio! Added to this is the tremendous importance we ourselves have placed on things temporal. We have made gods out of material success and the accumulation of material possessions. We send our children to school for five days of every week to equip and prepare them for making the most out of this life. But when it comes to educating them for eternity, I dare say that our concern is not so great. Cold statistics bear witness to the fact that our congregation has averaged only 53% attendance of the total Sunday School enrollment during the last year. When I expressed my concern about the Christian education of the children in one family of our congregation, I was promptly told that weekends were the only free time the children had and I could not expect them to attend every Sunday. Maybe I can't, but God does! Choose you this day whom ye will serve! What could possibly be more important than training our children for eternity, teaching them the truth of God's Word? What are 60 or 70 years, or even 80 or 90 years, compared to the endless forever of eternity? If these lambs whom God has entrusted to our care are to be undergirded with spiritual strength and moral uprightness and a firm faith in Christ as Lord and Savior that will see them through the temptations of this life into the glories of heaven, we must begin now to lay this foundation of faith and conviction. Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ!

I shall never forget the counsel of one of my professors at the Seminary He said, Gentlemen, when you step into the pulpit, you must preach as if this were your last opportunity to speak the Word of God to your congregation. It may be that God will call one or the other of them home before the next Sunday comes.

It may be that Christ will return to call the whole church unto Himself. You must preach with an urgency and conviction that will not fail to impress itself upon your people. You must preach the cross in such a way that no one leaving your church will have any doubts about the way to heaven, the way through Him who has said, 'I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no man cometh unto the Father but by Me.' Next Sunday may be too late! Teachers, have you been teaching your classes with such urgency and conviction? Have you remembered that this may be your last opportunity to tell them about Jesus, His love, His death upon the Cross to take away our sins, that we might live, and His rising again from the dead that we might never die? Has your teaching been surrounded by an air of excitement - the excitement of telling once more the Good News, the Best News that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners?

What, I ask, are we as a congregation doing to show our concern for Christian education? Is there a John or a Mary down the block from you who does not know Jesus and the one Way to heaven because you felt you could not be bothered to bring them to Sunday School and Church? Are we content with mediocre facilities and equipment in our Sunday School, or does the training of our children for life and forever require the very best that we can supply? Do we understand that there is no time to waste, that next month or next year may be too late?

Parents and god-parents, I ask you, Are you aware of the fact that God has given you children not to have and to hold, but to have and to mold? When you so glibly resolve not to go to church this Sunday, do you know that there may never be another Sunday for you or your children? How can you expect to instill a reverence and a holy awe for God's Word in your children, if you, yourself, never open the Bible are indifferent, unconcerned about going to Bible Class and Church? Choose you this day whom ye will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell; but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord!

Joshua established God as the center of his home. Irrespective of what

others did, he knew the couse he would pursue, and was fully aware of what would be best for his children. Undoubtedly his wife concurred with him in his decision, and both embraced parenthood with an eye singled to God's glory. The reason why so many children are growing up with a satanic scale of values is that we have not assumed the responsibilities of parenthood with more of a desire to glorify God. I believe Billy Sunday was right when he said, The wave of lawlessness which has been sweeping our land is largely due to the lack of control in the home. Outlawism is not settled by the street mob; it's a question of obedience in the home. We confront signs everywhere which say, Safety First, but in this tragic hour we could well change them to read, Home First. Who will deny that the mother of Moses did more for the world than pharoah who built the pyramids of Egypt or Alexander who conquered the world?

The Bible has much to say about fathers and mothers and also about the rearing of children. David wrote: I thought on my ways and turned my feet unto Thy testimonies. All too often we have not thought on our ways and plunged carelessly into parenthood. To be a parent is a grave responsibility as well as a wonderful privilege.

Fatherhood must be the greatest thing in the world, since God has revealed Himself in this highest and most sacred of all relationships. His Word teaches us to approach Him saying, Our Father which art in heaven. As such He is the Source and Imparter of life. Yet it is to fathers that God directs Himself when He says, Ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath; but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. It is upon fathers, as the head of the home, that God places the responsibility of Christian training, when He says, And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house and when thou walkest by the way and when thou liest down and when thou risest up. One day fathers will have to give an account to God for theiway in which they have raised their children.

A hush of silence sweeps over us as we breathe the word mother. Christianity exalts motherhood as no other religion in the history of the world. Our Lord entered our humanity through the portals of a woman's life, and thus in a special sense sanctified motherhood. To be a mother is to hold the reigns of a nation. A mother's hand is mightier than a king's scepter, and, this being true, every mother is called to utmost consideration of her high office.

The most precious little bundle ever laid in the arms of parents is a child. Parents who do not feel an overwhelming sense of responsibility before God with the advent of that tiny spark of life are not worthy of it. If a baby is regarded as nothing more than a burden, far better would it be had the infant never been born. God's Word calls upon us to redeem the time because the days are evil. Surely, there is no better way to redeem it than for fathers, mothers, and children to reverently and daily search the Scriptures to find Christ the Lord, and so instruct and prepare each other for eternity.

Someone asked a farmer how he was able to produce such beautiful sheep. His reply was a classic: I take care of the lambs. Theodore Roosevelt once said: If you are going to do anything permanent for the average man, you must begin before he is a man. The chance of success lies with working with a boy and not the man. Can you see, then, why this business of Christian education is of such vast importance? The Lord is looking to us to feed His lambs and sheep with the unadulterated milk of His Word. We must give them the best. The salvation of their souls is at stake. We must never get away from the fact that our children will talk as we talk, they will walk where we walk, and they will act as we do

Perhaps some of you, as you were crammed into your seats this morning and saw the children process down the isle, thought to yourself, It will be good to get back to normal again. It may have seemed like a good thought at the time, but by now I think it must be clear that normal can never be good enough again. Let us keep the high inspiration, the zeal, the earnestness, the hopefulness that has characterized this day. Let us make every Sunday a Rally Day, as fathers,

mothers, and children rally around the throne of our great God in worship and adoration. Let us make every day a Lord's Day, as with Bible in hand we say with Joshua: As for me and my house; we will serve the Lord.

Amen.