Sunday School Rally Day
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 blot out the Name of Christ for every $1.00 Christians spend to proclaim His holy Name, it seem to me that the whole matter of Christian education ought to be of vital concern to each of us. 20 to 1 - that is the ratio. Added to this is the tremendous importance we have placed on things temporal. We have made gods out of material succes and self-indulgence. Live for the moment - Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow you die - Enjoy yourself; it's later than you think -- this is the philosophy of life that runs hot in the American bloodstream and which has given a completely distorted and blurred conception to our children of what real life is all about. We send our children to school for five days of every week to equip and prepare the for making the most out of this life. You've got to have a good education to get ahead these days - The more education you have, the more money you can make. And certainly no one will deny or try to minimize the importance of education in our world and time. But is this the sole end and goal of what life is all about? What about educating and raising our children for eternity - or is this really of small consequence? Have we honestly taken the admonition of Christ to heart: What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

Cold statistics bear witness to the fact that our congregation has averaged only 56% attendance of the total Sunday School enrollment during the course of this year. Recently, a mother told me flatly that weekends were the only free time her children had and that I could not possibly 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 Word of the Living God? What are 80, 90, or even 100 years compared to the

endless forever of eternity? If children are to be undergirded with spiritual strength, moral uprightness, and a firm faith in Christ as Redeemer and Lord that will see them through the pitfalls and temptations of earth to the glories of eternity, then it is never to early to lay the foundation. Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

I shall never forget the good counsel of one of my professors at the Seminary. Gentlemen, he said, when you step into the pulpit, you must preach as if this were your last opportunity to speak the Word of God to you 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 proclaim the Cross in such a way that no one leaving your church will have any doubts about the one and only 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.

With each new Sunday our congregation stands at the great crossroads. Today, by the grace of God, we have the opportunity to teach and to tell the Word and the Will of God. It may never come again - but today we have that chance. Surely the air ought to crackle with the urgency and excitement and thrill of it. Our teaching and telling ought to have the clear ring of sincerity and truth. Certainly we are to teach what God expects of His people - but more than that we are to proclaim what God has done - how He gave His only Son, how Christ lived, and suffered, and died for our sins - that we might live forever. Surely this is still the Good News, the Best News that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other Name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved!

If we are concerned about educating our children for eternity, then we will stop at nothing to do the best job possible. Speak a word of encouragement to children How many of us have honestly taken the time to become acquainted with the children on our block, to find out if there is a John or a Mary who is attending no church or Sunday School, and inviting

them to come along? Or would this upset our neat little pattern and inconvenience us too much? Have we argued that our Sunday School is already too overcrowded - that we don't have the room to put any more children? Do we understand that God has put us here in this place, at this time, to serve Him - or are we content to be a closed corporation? Are we content with mediocre facilities and equipment, or does the training of our children for life and forever require the very best that we can supply.

When a child become sick, parents will count no cost in providing what is necessary to restore the child to good health. I dare say that most of us will make great sacrifices and even do without ourselves so that our children can have the proper food, clothing, and even the latest toys. But what about their soul and their salvation - or doesn't this really matter. Fathers and mothers, when you so glibly resolve not to go to church this Sunday, do you understand that there may never be another Sunday for you or your children? How can you expect to instill a reverence and holy awe for God and His Word in your children, if you yourself never open the Bible and are indifferent about worship and Bible Class? Do you understand that your children will talk as you talk, they will walk where you walk, and they will act as you do? Long ago God's servant Joshua called upon the childre of Israel to make a choice. Quit kidding yourself that you can walk a doubld road! 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 put God at the center of his home. Irrespective of what others did, he knew the course 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 because parents have not assumed their responsibilities with more of a desire to glorify God. To be a parent is a rich blessing and wonderful privilege, but it is also a great responsibility. God's Word calls upon us to redeem the time because the days are evil. Surely,

Unfortunately, many children have a complete misconception of what God is like, because their earthly fathers have failed miserably in their role as father.

there is no better way to redeem it than for fathers, mothers, and children to serve the Lord - to reverently and daily search the Scriptures to find Christ, and so to become heirs together of the grace of life.

Fatherhood must be the greatest thing in the world, since God has revealed Himself as Father. His Word teaches us to approach Him saying, Our Father which art in heaven. As such He is the Source and Imparter of life. He cares and He provides and He gives of Himself. And it is to fathers, as the head of the house, 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. It is to fathers that God speaks when He says, Ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath; but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. How can fathers do this unless they are close to the Lord themselves? Too many men are close to everything but to the Lord. The truth of this sad fact is vividly brought out in a poem. I wish I knew who wrote it. It goes like this:

A little girl with shining eyes -
Her little face aglow -
Said, "Daddy, it is almost time
For church to start. Let's go!
And sing the love of Him who died
To bring us to His Father's side."

"Oh, no!" said Daddy, "not today.
I've worked hard all the week,
I'm going to the creek,
For there I can relax the best,
And I must have one day of rest,
And fishing's fine, they say.
So run along; don't bother me,
We'll go to church some other day."

Months and years have passed away;
But daddy hears that plea no more -
Those childish days are o'er.
And now that daddy's growing old
And life is almost through,
There's plenty time to go to church;
But what does daughter do?
She says: "O daddy, not today -
I' stayed up most all night,
And I've just got to get some sleep;
Besides, I look a fright."

Then Daddy lifts a trembling hand
to brush away the tears,
As again he hears the pleading voice
Distinctly through the years.
He sees a small girl's shining face
Upturned, with eyes aglow,
Who says, "It's almost time for church.
Please, Daddy, won't you go?"

Next to father stands mother as helpmate in the task of raising children Christianity exalts motherhood as no other religion in the history of the world. Our Lord entered our humanity through the portals of a mother's womb, and thus in a very special sense sanctified motherhood. 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 great tragedy is that too many mothers today have assumed the role of nagger, clothes horse, or pampered doll instead of wife, mother, and counselor. Some women are more interested in their social clubs than they are in their children. They tell their children how to act instead of showing them how to act. They demand their respect instead of earning it.

Someone once asked a farmer how he was able to produce such beautiful sheep. His answer 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 in working with a boy and not the man. The Lord is looking to us to feed His lambs with the bread of life. We must give them the best. Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it - That is God's promise. What else, then, can we do but make every Sunday a Rally Day, as fathers, mothers, and children rally around the throne of our great God in worship and adoration. What else can we do but 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.