

Ladies Article

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General Articles

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A Positive Diagnosis

Our world has been turned upside down by a virus. Our way of life has been interrupted, and we are unsure how things are going to change for us going forward. Despite all the uncertainty and anxiety we may be experiencing, one thing remains true: God continues to rule. He is sovereign over all things, even the Coronavirus. This means we have no reason to fear. The virus cannot take away our eternal home. Covid-19 cannot rob us of our promised blessings in Christ.

It is so easy to worry right now. It is easy to speak out of fear for the loss of our way of life. The economy has been impacted. Millions have lost jobs. But these things are not our identity! Regardless of any changes to our economy, government, or daily routines, our outlook on life can be as bright as ever. It is good to be a Christian!

Examples from Biblical Youth

David Dixon

Teaching children and teens about the Bible is not as difficult as one might think. Their minds are naturally inquisitive, they are practiced at receiving instruction, and they use their imaginations to visualize the accounts and descriptions provided for them. Adults, on the other hand, can be tough nuts to crack. Adults can be set in their ways, they may not have been to school for decades, and they may not have used their imaginations since childhood. Adults want the black and white, the cut and dried, the facts and figures, whereas children are open to the applications.

There are many children and young people in Scripture from whom anyone can learn good lessons. In every age, the examination of the lives of Biblical youth is beneficial to the old and young alike. Consider a few young people in the Bible, and the lessons that should be learned from them.

From Joseph we learn about dedication. Maybe Joseph needed to learn some humility, but once he was sold into slavery by his own brethren and then cast into prison by his master for a crime he did not commit, he showed every believer in



God what true commitment looks like. He refused to be persuaded by the advances of his master's wife, because he was dedicated to his understanding of God's plan for a family. There was nothing to stop him from lying with Potiphar's wife; no older brothers to scold him, no priests of Jehovah to rebuke him, no parent to warn him. He was there alone with her in his late teens or early twenties. His commitment to purity is truly remarkable considering the circumstances. What would have stopped him from succumbing to her temptations except his dedication to the family he intended on starting and leading, and his knowledge that this act would break apart a marriage that was not his own? Joseph obviously knew God's plan for a family and was so dedicated to that plan for his own life that he refused to "do this great wickedness, and sin against God" (Gen. 39:9). From Joseph we learn about dedication to God's plan for the family.

From Daniel we learn about abstinence. It is never revealed explicitly in the text, but in all likelihood, Daniel was made a eunuch at some point in his youth, probably upon his arrival in Babylon as a captive. Assuming this to be true, abstinence from the lusts of the flesh was a given for Daniel. In addition to this, however, Daniel had prepared his heart to abstain from the wickedness that was presented to him daily in the court of the kings of Babylon. "But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself: (Dan. 1:8). If it would defile him, Daniel refused to do it. This is exemplary behavior for anyone of any age. Defilement can come in the form of alcohol, sex, food, entertainment, or covetousness. It is common for Christians to

refuse to defile themselves with drunkenness or fornication, but it is another matter when it comes to the amount of food we eat, or the movies we watch, or the debt we incur. "Abstain from every form of evil," Paul says in 1 Thessalonians 5:22 (NKJV). If it defiles us, we should abstain from it.

From Timothy we learn about growth. Timothy was taught the faith by his mother and grandmother. Timothy was enlisted as a youth by Paul to become a preacher in the Lord's kingdom. He went with Paul on several of his missionary journeys, and he was able to learn from the apostle many unique lessons about ministry. Yet, when Timothy took on the work as the located minister at Ephesus, Paul wrote to him twice encouraging him to hold fast to the doctrine and the faith which had been taught to him (2 Tim. 1:13). The work of a local preacher can be taxing on anyone, but especially a young minister. Paul instructed Timothy to trust the word of God more than he trusted the words of the people. He told Timothy not to be discouraged by the judgment of some about his youthfulness, but rather to be an example to those same people of how to receive such condemnation (1 Tim. 4:12). Surely, in the time that Timothy worked at Ephesus, he grew as a preacher. From the time he spent with Paul, and from Paul's encouragement to him, Timothy grew in his wisdom for dealing with people. Young Timothy serves as an example of how to grow in the faith.

Maybe we look at the modern generation of young people and we have little hope for the future of our nation and society. But there are good young people, and there always will be. The young people we read about in Scripture can serve as examples for Christians of every age. If you look within your own congregations there are likely young people who are trying not to defile themselves with the portion of luxuries provided in today's world. Encourage these young people like Paul encouraged Timothy. Give them an example to follow, and learn from them what true dedication to righteousness looks like.



It Goes Without Saying

Leah Faughn

It is a common phrase. It is often used when one means, "Well, of course, I shouldn't *have* to make *that* point, should I?" Then they add the phrase, "It goes without saying!"

I wonder, though, if too many parents have that same attitude when teaching and training their children. Do you? Are there things that you are *assuming* your children know, but leaving those things unsaid? Here are three areas where words should not go without saying.

1. Etiquette. Some parents leave any words regarding manners unsaid. Maybe they think their kids will just grow into it. Maybe they think manners are not important in the grand scheme of things. Personally, I think that manners are becoming rarer, seemingly by the day. It could be that in our post-modern world anything that is a standard is shunned. I think that there ought to be a standard in our conduct. Of course, the Bible is the ultimate standard in our conduct, but the idea of "manners" really originates from the idea that there should be a common standard of behavior. Children need to be taught to say "thank you" and "please." Children need to be taught to answer with "yes ma'am" or "no ma'am" or "yes sir" or "no sir". They need to be taught to answer politely when spoken to. Why do children not know this in our day and time? They don't know this because their parents are leaving it unsaid. The truth is,



- parents have to say it every single day for many years before it starts to stick. Don't give up.
- 2. Biblical Doctrine. Some parents leave words about doctrine unsaid. It seems like some parents think that just exposing their children to doctrine a few times a week is enough. It is surely necessary to expose them, but we can do so much more. Parents ought to make sure their kids are learning the doctrine of the Bible. There are so many ways to do this. Parents should be implementing family devotionals. Parents should be doing their best to make sure their kids know basic Bible facts. Parents ought to be teaching their kids about worship and how to worship. Don't leave words about doctrinal and spiritual things unsaid.
- **3. Family Legacy.** Some parents leave too many words about family unsaid. Parents need to be building a strong family unit by developing traditions. Parents need to be making sure their children know how important they are to the family unit. Parents need to be teaching their children about their family heritage. We will leave a great family legacy, unless we leave words about our family unsaid.

As parents, we need to be certain that we are actually speaking the words to our children that we want them to hear and know. Say the words, be clear, and teach and train your children. I mean, that goes without saying, right?

Editor's Note: This article originally appeared on A Legacy of Faith (faughnfamily.com), a great resource for articles about family life. This article is used here with permission.

The Days are Long; The Years Short

Adam Faughn

"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."

Deuteronomy 6:6-7 KJV

As parents, there are days that seem to drag on for more like 34 hours than 24. When it is one activity after another, all while one kid is starting to not feel well and the other is going into "attitude mode," it can feel like a monumental accomplishment just to finally get to bed at night, having completed another day.

Then, something amazing happens. You look around and that two-year-old is now in middle school and the newborn is having his first "double-digit" birthday. It all seems like a flash, as memories flood your mind constantly and you start to see years slipping through your fingers.

How is it possible that those days that seem to crawl by somehow add up to years that only seem to have about 100 days in them? I suppose we will never fully grasp it, but virtually every parent knows that feeling.

What does that mean for parents, especially who are seeking to have a Christian home? Knowing the days are going to seem long, but the years short, let me offer 7 spiritual suggestions for making the most of it all.

- 1. Focus on the Long-Term (Especially the Eternal). While we should make memories each day (more about that in a moment), each decision we make needs to be made with the understanding that we are not raising children; we are raising adults! Further, we are raising souls who will stand before the Lord in judgment one of these days. We dare not compromise their responsibility to their fellow man in this life; nor their eternal destiny when this life is over with short-term, worldly thinking.
- 2. Cherish Each Day. Yes, there are days that are going to drag on, and you are going to wonder if you will survive. But you will never have this day with your children again. No matter how bad it gets, cherish that you have them for this day. Do your best to make memories. They do not have to be Instagramworthy; just something that makes you smile is enough to make it a day to remember.
- 3. Do Not Compare Your Life to the Highlight Reel of Others. Do you scroll through Facebook or Instagram and see families taking trips, going on walks, making meals, playing games, and doing so many other things together, while you are forcing your kids to clean their rooms...again? The fact is, you are seeing a compilation of every other family's best moments, and it is not fair to yourself or to your children to compare your ups and downs with only the "ups" of other people. Instead, we should be reminding our children that God is good in both the ups and downs of life.

- 4. Have Spiritual Traditions. Families have traditions; it is part of what makes them bond and makes each family unique. However, so many of those traditions involve sports or movies or even specific meals. Those are great, but make sure you build some traditions around spiritual things. Maybe every Saturday evening is time to sing spiritual songs as a family. Maybe there is a Bible story read before breakfast each morning. Maybe it is simply listening to hymns on the way to worship each Lord's Day. These are not "salvation issue" matters, but they build into your children that certain spiritual activities are going to happen and are going to be important to your little family.
- 5. Expose Your Children to a Myriad of Life Experiences. I remember standing in line at a funeral visitation a number of years ago. Behind me was a young lady I knew well. She was a member of our church's youth group and was probably about 14 at the time. I could tell something was wrong, so I asked if she was okay. She confided to me that she was very uneasy because this was the first time in her life that she had ever been inside a funeral home. We are doing our children a disservice if we do not help them know how to deal with places and circumstances that can be awkward or uncomfortable. Take them to funerals, hospitals, nursing facilities, weddings, and other places where a certain decorum (and unease) is expected. There is no one better to learn from than you how to handle these situations.
- 6. Make Service a Part of Life. You do not have to have some type of official "service projects," but helping and encouraging others should be part of your family's lifestyle. Taking food to others or having the children help make some cards is a great place to start, but let them use their own creativity, as well. After all, they need to see that life is not about what we get, but the better life is about what we give (cf. Acts 20:35).
- 7. **Put Nothing before Worship**. Unless sickness comes, your family needs to be in worship. When you go on vacation, make certain you plan to worship with the Lord's body. When you are tired, go to worship. The Super Bowl, the big sale, or a great day for fishing never comes before worship. Children need to see that the rhythm of our life always includes worship and not just because it is commanded (Hebrews 10:25), but because it is our highest weekly priority and we cannot wait to show God how much we love Him.

None of these things is easy, and each of them takes time. But each one is time well spent, because it makes the most of those years that rapidly pass, while filling those "dragging" days with the most valuable things that teach our children to honor God with their very best, every day of their lives.

When Did David Practice Social Distancing?

Mike Benson

There are a total of 222 recorded prayers in the Bible—176 in the Old Testament and 46 in the New Testament. Nearly one out of every four of those prayers chronicled in Scripture were uttered by Jesse's son, David.

Abraham prayed three prayers in Genesis (15:2-3; 17:18; 18:23-32). Moses prayed four prayers in Exodus (4:13; 5:22-23; 32:31-32; 33:12-13), seven prayers in Numbers (10:35-36; 11:10-15, 21-22; 12:13; 14:13-19; 16:15; 27:16-17), two prayers in Deuteronomy (3:24-25; 9:26-29), and one prayer in Psalms (90) for a total of fourteen. Joshua prayed two prayers in Joshua (7:7-9; 10:12). Elijah prayed three prayers in 1 Kings (17:20-21; 18:36-37; 19:4). Nehemiah prayed eight prayers in Nehemiah (1:5-11; 4:1-6; 6:9, 14; 13:14, 22, 29, 31). David, by contrast, prayed three prayers in 1 Samuel (23:2-4, 10-12; 30:8), four prayers in 2 Samuel (2:1; 5:19; 7:18-29; 24:10), one prayer in 1 Chronicles (29:10-19), and fifty prayers in Psalms (3-7; 9; 12:1-13:6; 16:1-17:15; 19:1-20:9; 22; 25:1-31:24; 35:1-36:12; 38:1-41:13; 51; 54:1-61:8; 64; 69:1-70:5; 86; 108:1-109:31; 119; 124; 132; 139:1-144:15)—for a total of fiftyeight. If we also attribute the thirteen prayers offered by an unknown psalmist to David (10:33; 43:1-44:26; 71; 85; 88; 102; 106; 118; 120; 123; 125; 129; 137), then his total number of prayers surges to seventy-one.

David was a man of prayer. Ironically, 1 Samuel 27 records an aberration—an odd occasion when this mighty hero of the faith failed to make inquiry of God. Contextually, this notable prayer-void was during that lengthy period of time when David was being pursued by King Saul (cf. 1 Samuel 21-31). The Bible says, "And David said in his heart, 'Now I shall perish someday by the hand of Saul. There is nothing better for me than that I should speedily escape to the land of the Philistines; and Saul will despair of me, to see me anymore in any part of Israel. So I shall escape out of his hand'" (1 Sam. 27:1 NKJV).

Consider a few, important observations from this text. Note: "David said in his heart..." The ancients believed that the heart was the seat of the emotions. When Samuel recorded that "David said in his HEART," we recognize that the internal conversation David held was probably more about what he was feeling than what he was thinking. And what was he feeling? The very fact that he was continually fleeing for his life tells us that he was feeling fatigue and fear.

"I shall perish someday by the hand of Saul.." When we recount the fact that just in 1 Samuel chapters 18 and 19, Saul tried to kill David at least *twelve* times (cf. 18:11, 13, 17, 20ff; 19:1, 10, 11ff, 19:18ff), it's easy to imagine that David felt a certain inevitability about his demise. It was a done deal from his perspective. Sooner or later Saul would eventually catch up with him and either murder him himself or do so by some external means.

The problem was, *David actually knew better*. He knew he'd survive all of those assassination attempts. Back in 1 Samuel 16, Samuel had already, *with God's authority*, anointed David to be the next king of Israel (vv. 12-13). In chapter 23 his best friend, Jonathan, had reassured him that he would possess the throne (v. 17). In chapter 25, his wife, Abigail, reminded her husband that the Lord would keep His promise and elevate David as Israel's next ruler (v. 30). Even Saul himself admitted it (24:20)!

And yet, David in his weariness and languor, had somehow managed to forget what God had said through his various peers. David's feelings of fear trumped and overshadowed God's truth—at least for the moment. But now watch again:

"There is nothing better for me than that I should speedily escape..." Wait, what?! "NOTHING better, David?!" David, the praying man, the man after God's own heart, the man who had in his earlier days killed a lion, a bear, and a giant, now decided that there was nothing better for him to do than to tuck-tail and change zip codes!

And here's where the rubber met the road. Instead of praying for divine guidance on the matter of Saul's relentless pursuit, David decided to socially-distance himself from the king—and in so doing, he simultaneously distanced himself from the Almighty. David left Israelite territory and went to (are you ready for this?), the Philistine city of Gath—again, (Goliath's old home!) and resided there for a year and four months (v. 7)!

So what can we learn from this prayer-less time in David's life? What practical mustard seeds can we glean from how David dealt with his fatigue and fear?

1. When we, like David, allow our feelings to take precedence in our thinking, we inevitably, inexorably start trusting in our own wisdom and in our own selves instead of God. Think about a few similar examples. When Abraham lied, not once, but twice about his wife's identity (Gen. 12:10-20; 20:2), he was being controlled by his own fear rather than trusting in the wisdom of God. When Sarah laughed at God's promise of a future son, she was trusting in her own feelings instead of God (Gen. 18:12-15). When Moses struck the rock, instead of speaking to it as instructed, he was elevating his own feelings of anger over the wisdom of God (Num. 20:11). Peter started walking out on the water toward his Lord, but when he took his eyes off of Jesus and saw the strong wind, he succumbed to his fear instead of trusting in the Son of God (Mat. 14:30). That's why Jeremiah warned, "O LORD, I know the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man who walks to direct his own steps" (Jer. 10:23; cf. Prov. 14:12; Luke 18:9).

Remember, Church—pain, suffering and adversity can blind us to the wisdom and power of God to such a point that we listen to our own wisdom, which, in turn, effectively cancels out the wisdom of God.

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22 STEPS TO THE ELECTRIC CHAIR

V E Howard

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Every road is arrived at by steps and so is every destination, including the death house. This is a true story of life. A young man at age twenty sat in the death row at Tennessee State Prison with only seven hours remaining before he took the last twenty-two steps to the death chair. At that time, at the eleventh hour, the Governor of Tennessee commuted his sentence and spared his life. He went under "Operation Crime Prevention" telling his story of how he was saved only twenty-two steps away. He said, "I was brought up by Christian parents, and I had a good education. But you're not sent to prison for going to church or school. I'm in prison because I made the wrong decision." Remember what we said about right values determine right thinking [which] determines right decisions.

Here are twenty-two steps, I suggest, that just might set a child on the road to the electric chair. Please note them carefully:

- 1. Begin early and give the child everything he or she wants. Then he will believe the world owes him a living.
- Start early in the child's life and do everything for him. Never permit him to do the things he is capable of doing for himself, so he will be experienced in throwing burdens on others
- 3. Make him thoroughly dependent on you by waiting on him, until the habit is well established.
- 4. Permit the child todo as he pleases. He will want to continue this in society.
- Praise him lavishly in his presence. Show him how much smarter he is than other children.
- 6. Tell religious jokes in his presence and have a good laugh at the expense of the "Holy Joes." Tell him these religious people are all fanatics.
- 7. Lose your patience easily. Blow up and bluster and blast the air around your child. Unnerve him and prepare him for tension, headaches, and ulcers.
- 8. Tell people that your child never does anything wrong.
- 9. Ride him all the time and tell him that he is clumsy and can't do anything right. Tell him things are too hard for him and that he should not attempt the things he wants to do. He will accommodate his life to your expectations.
- 10. Always find fault with him and never compliment him on the things he performs well. Nag him constantly.

- 11. Run down the government in his presence. Cynically let him hear you say that all politicians are rotten and corrupt and that young people are going to the dogs anyhow.
- 12. Interrogate him every time he comes home from school or any place about how he did, and where he did it. This will cause him to quit telling you anything and clam up.
- 13. Avoid using the word "wrong." It may develop in him a complex. This will prepare him to believe that when he is punished later on for stealing that society is "against him" and that he is being persecuted.
- 14. Tell everyone that nothing is too good for your child. Pamper and pet him, and make life easy for him so if he does not have everything he wants, when times get hard, then he will be mentally prepared to take it by force or fraud.
- 15. Give him more spending money than he needs and never make him earn his own. This way he might rob a bank later on to get money.
- 16. Make him a cynic by letting him get the impression that there is another "real" story behind the first story. Poison his mind with suspicious tendencies.
- 17. Quarrel frequently in his presence and he will be prepared for a contentious life and perhaps a broken home later on in his married life.
- 18. Satisfy his every whim, caprice and craving for food, drink and everything that has to do with the sense of taste and touch
- 19. Take his part against teachers, policemen and neighbors. They are do-gooders and "prejudiced against your child." Believe everything your boy says.
- 20. When he gets into real trouble, always defend yourself and say, "I could never do anything with that boy."
- 21. Try to pressure him into making up his grades when he is naturally slow. This will help him to be nervous and unpredictable and eccentric.
- 22. Let him get the idea that it's all right to fudge on his grades, to tell a "white lie," to sow a little "wild oats," and to sneak into functions and activities without paying. Enjoy a hearty laugh with him over his little escapades by which he foxed someone with his budding criminal cunning and deceived someone else with his disarming dishonesty and crookedness.

These may not, but they also may, set your child on a path that leads straight to the cell block that is 22 steps away from a shameful death.

(continued from page 5)

2. The devil wants us, like David, to dwell in enemy territory; he wants us to start living in Gath. When David fled from Saul and started living outside of Israel, he may have escaped Saul, but he didn't completely separate himself from his foes. On the contrary, he actually compromised God's will and allied himself with Achish—a Philistine lord/king (vv. 5ff)!

Christians sometimes to do the same thing, don't they? On occasion, when they're weary and afraid, they think with their feelings and justify taking residence in the adversaries' domain (cf. 1 Pet. 5:8).

How many Christians have tried to escape their incessant pain, and in turn, fled to a bottle of alcohol or illicit drugs (Prov. 20:1)? How many children of God have sought to escape the problems within their own hurting marriages only to run headlong into the arms of other broken relationships (Prov. 6:32; cf. Rom. 6:1)? How many members of the body of Christ have, like David, experienced long-term, wearisome heartache, and then given themselves permission to run to pornography in the enemy's territory (Mat. 5:27-28; 1 Cor. 6:18)? How many saints in God's kingdom have left the obstacles within their own congregation's fellowship, only to take up residence with those in the denominational world outside of Christ (cf. 1 Cor. 15:33; 2 Cor. 6:14; Eph. 2:12)? How many elderships at large, and shepherds individually, have ignored and seemingly liberated themselves from a dilemma within their flock, and in so doing, have actually fled to the adversaries' province because they refused to lead and be active as the Lord requires (cf. Acts 20:28ff; Jas. 4:17)?

Beloved, running, leaving, and or fleeing is never the answer to our troubles. Paul asked rhetorically, "What then shall we say to these things? IF GOD IS FOR US, WHO CAN BE AGAINST US" (Rom. 8:31—emphasis mine, mb)?! And the answer is? Nobody! David knew that, he was controlled by his fear, and he ran anyway.

Dear reader, are you, like David, trying to escape from your Saul? Have you fled from the relentless pursuit of your problems and then run right into the very thing you disdain?

God pleads for you to stop running—and turn your cares over to Him. "Casting all you care upon Him, for He cares for you" (1 Pet. 5:7; Psa. 102:7; Jer. 29:12; Phil. 4:6).

We Must Have Faith

by Eva Nell Naramore

I'll live with faith until I see, our Father's shining face,
At home above, where all is love, where He prepares a place,
For us to live eternally: our loved ones there to see;
No more good-byes, no body cries, from pain we'll be set free.

When truth is taught, so sweet the thought of that homecoming day;
It's not His will that we be lost, He teaches us to pray.
God's word for us is heaven sent, we dare not change His plans,
But every soul will find sweet rest, that lives by His commands.

We know not what tomorrow brings, but we have choice today,
To do His will with faith and hope: there is no other way.

Be not deceived by man-made plans, built on the sinking sand;
Build on the Rock! The Solid Rock! It will forever stand!

PLEASE SUBMIT CHANGE OF ADDRESS!

Every month we have a few publications returned to us due to mailing records that are not up to date. Each return costs us money in addition to the initial postage. We ask that you please submit updated mailing information if you are moving so that you will not miss any issues. You may submit your change of address by mailing us at 1501 6th Ave., Jasper, AL, 35501, or by emailing us at office@sixthavenuechurch.org. If we do not receive updated information we will have to remove those that are returned from the mailing list.

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We hope and pray that you will use our website for personal growth in the faith of Jesus Christ. On our website you will find many resources including bulletins, sermon audios, Bible correspondence courses, Searching for Truth materials, and House to House/Heart to Heart materials. You can also sign up to receive our bulletin by email or submit questions you would like to have answered. On the website you will also find back issues of *Words of Truth*. Please visit regularly and use the resources available to you!

ASK A BIBLE QUESTION

QUESTION: Why have Bible classes on Sundays and Wednesdays? Shouldn't Bible teaching be done in the home?

ANSWER: The Bible class is not designed to take the place of the home. Paul placed on fathers the responsibility of raising children to be believers. "And you fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4).

Bible classes are designed to reinforce the biblical principles taught in Christian homes and to supplement the material presented from the pulpit. The Bible school will help bridge the gap in the Bible knowledge of those who do not have the blessing of Christian parents or those whose parents fail to train and admonish their children biblically throughout the week.

The purpose of the Bible school is to teach the Word of God in a practical way so people of all ages can live for God. The Word of God in the hearts of students is the goal of our Bible classes. The Bible must be taught as a personal message from God the heart of the student.

SEVEN REASONS FOR GOING TO BIBLE CLASS

- 1. The best book is the studied (God's book; the Bible).
- 2. The best day is utilized (The Lord's Day; Sunday).
- 3. The best people are assembled (The people of God; Christians).
- 4. The best institution is involved (The Lord's Church).
- 5. The best work is being done (evangelism and edification; the work of Jesus Christ).
- 6. The best development is assured (spiritual development; seeking first the kingdom of God).
- 7. The best preparation is supplied (complete, equipped for every good work; a workman unashamed).