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# Words of Truth

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## Even The Best Teachers Need To Be Students

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If you're a parent, there is likely more than one occasion wherein you've learned a valuable lesson through your children. I have learned lessons from all three of my children. I am not talking about them doing their school work and telling me something about a subject that I had not known. I am talking about valuable, spiritual lessons. These lessons are not always verbal or things intended to help us learn. These are things wherein sometimes the innocence of a child or the humility of a child comes through as a powerful voice of action.

It is easy for us to see ourselves as teachers. The word of God says we're lights unto the world (Matthew 5:14-16 and Philippians 2:14-16). Even if you presently do not see yourself as a teacher, you know that God expects you to become one in some capacity (Hebrews 5:12-14). What we must always do, know matter how knowledgeable we become, is never stop being students. Certainly, that includes being students of the word of God (Psalms 119:97-105, John 5:39, II Timothy 2:14-18, and II Peter 3:15-18).

The lessons we can learn are not just limited to our studies of God's word (though we must verify that what we learn is always right according to His word - Acts 17:10-11). Sometimes the lessons we need to learn are taught by the examples of others. In this we must learn to be observant. Sometimes the people we can learn valuable lessons from are not the obvious example setters. We can see this when Jesus uses someone as an example who many may have overlooked. We'll start the heart of our study with this point.

### Jesus Used A Child As A Teacher

*"At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and **become as little children**, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall **humble himself as this little child**, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 18:1-4).*

In the example of teaching you just read above, a little child was used to teach a lesson on humility. We know that all children are not necessarily a good example (Proverbs 22:15). Like all people, a child is known through his or her works (Proverbs 20:11). Obviously, the specific child that Jesus used was a good example of humility. Here is where some "adults" fail. Some "adults" think that all children should be seen and not heard. Folks, sometimes there are children that we can learn a lot from.

Some children are wise, rather than foolish (Proverbs 23:24 and Ecclesiastes 4:13). Some children are even knowledgeable in the Scriptures. Timothy knew the Scriptures from the time he was a child (II Timothy 3:15). Some “adults” of our day feel as though children have nothing to share. How would such a person have responded to our Lord when He was twelve years old and teaching the truth in the temple (Luke 2:42-52)? Whether you are young or old, you must be humble enough to be a student any time there is a valuable lesson to learn.

### **Being Humble Enough To Always Be A Student**

We should all realize that being proud is sinful (Proverbs 6:16-19, Proverbs 8:13, Proverbs 11:2, Proverbs 16:5, Proverbs 16:18, Proverbs 21:4, James 4:6-10, I Peter 5:5-6, and I John 2:16). Pride keeps us from a relationship with God (Psalms 138:6). Proud people are fools (Proverbs 14:3). When we make statements of pride we’ve erred (Psalms 12:3). To be clear, one such statement is, “who are you to teach me” (cf. Isaiah 65:5).

Up to this point in the article I’ve mentioned a lot about how we can learn from a child. Please, do not limit this point to lessons we can learn from children. That was just one illustration of many that could be used. The HUGE point we cannot miss is that we must always be willing to learn. This has to always be true, regardless of who the lesson is from, as long as it is in accordance with God’s will. Again, this is true of verbal instruction as well as lessons learned through examples.

Ultimately, a willingness to learn from those whom we do not perceive to be teachers comes back to the lesson Jesus taught through that child. That lesson is humility. One of the reasons that Pharaoh did not listen to Moses was a lack of humility (Exodus 10:1-3). Why would a Pharaoh in Egypt, who has a great kingdom under his hand, consider listening to a lowly Hebrew? Pharaoh should have looked beyond Moses to see that the source of the message was the Almighty God. Moses was delivering to Pharaoh a “*thus saith the Lord*” message (Exodus 5:1, Exodus 7:14-17, Exodus 8:1, Exodus 8:20, etc.). Yet, the proud will not listen even when they know the message is from God (Psalms 10:4).

For us, we have to learn that all truth is ultimately from God (Deuteronomy 32:4, Psalms 31:5, and Isaiah 65:16). I have said, many times, that I will listen to the truth even if Satan himself is the messenger. When we’re obeying the truth we’re not obeying the one delivering the lesson. Obedience to the truth occurs when we obey the message (Romans 6:16-17 and I Peter 1:22). Of course, this does not mean that we start listening to false teachers, people of ignorance, etc. (Romans 16:17-18). At the same time, when you observe or hear a lesson, consider the message more than the messenger.

### **Conclusion**

*“A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels: To understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings. The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction... Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser: teach a just man, and he will increase in learning... Whoso loveth instruction loveth knowledge: but he that hateth reproof is brutish”* (Proverbs 1:5-7, Proverbs 9:9, and Proverbs 12:1).