

What Did You Learn From That?

Mark 8:14-21

Introduction:

- A. Often we think of learning only as recalling facts.
- B. We can also learn from life.
 - 1. I hit my nose when a hammer ricocheted from an oak 2" x 4", summer of 1962.
 - a. Daddy asked me how I did that.
 - b. I picked up the hammer and did it again.
 - c. I had to have a refresher course because I failed to learn the first time.
 - 2. *The University of Hard Knocks*, by Ralph Parlette.
 - a. The other day I watched a blind man go down the aisle of the car to get off the train. Did you ever study the walk of a blind man? He “pussyfooted” it along so carefully. He bumped his hand against a seat. Then he did what every blind man does, he lifted his hand higher and didn’t bump any more seats.

I looked down my nose. “Ralph Parlette,” I said to myself, “when are you going to learn to see as well as that blind man? He learns his lesson with one bump, and you have to go bumping into the same things day after day and wonder why you have so much ‘bad luck’!” (pages 18,19).
 - b. Let me repeat, things that go downward will run themselves. Things that go upward have to be pushed. Going upward is overcoming (page 19).
 - c. We think if we could only get into a great place we would be great. But unless we have grown as great as the place, we would be a great joke, for we would rattle. And when we have grown as great as the place, that sized place will generally come seeking us.

We do not become great by getting into a great place, any more than a boy becomes a man by getting into his father’s boots. He is in great boots, but he rattles. He must grow greater feet before he gets greater boots. But he must get the feet before he gets the boots (page 44).
 - d. We can be a pumpkin in one summer, with the accent on the “punk.” We can be a mushroom in a day, with the accent on the “mush.” But we cannot become an oak that way (page 45).
 - e. Do you note that people grow more in lean years than in fat years? Crop failures and business stringencies are not calamities, but blessings in disguise. People go to the devil with full pockets; they turn to God when hunger hits them. “Is not this Babylon that I have builded?” says the Nebuchadnezzar of material prosperity as he drinks to his gods. Then must come the Needful and Needless Knocks handwriting upon the wall to save him.

You have to shoot many men’s eyes out before they can see. You have to crack their heads before they can think, knock them down before they can stand, break their hearts before they can sing, and bankrupt them before they can be rich (page 118).

- C. Jesus taught with illustrations. Mark 4:33,34, NKJV
- D. We can learn from what we see, hear, experience.
 - 1. Broken, weedy fence. Proverbs 24:30-34
 - 2. What has been done can be done.
 - a. Feeding of the four thousand. Mark 8:1-9
 - b. Discussion about bread. Mark 8:13-21
 - c. Resurrection. 1 Thessalonians 4:14
- E. We can learn from others. Mark 3:14; 1 Corinthians 11:1; Philippians 4:9
- F. I can learn important things from experience, observation.
- G. God holds me responsible for learning from experience as well as learning from the Bible.

- I. THE EXISTENCE OF GOD. Romans 1:18-21; Psalm 19:1

- II. GOD'S PRINCIPLES.
 - A. Sowing and reaping. Genesis 8:22; Mark 4:1-20; Galatians 6:7-10:
 - B. Hearing. Mark 4:23-25; Luke 8:18
 - C. Condemnation, forgiveness. Luke 6:37,38
 - D. Money. 2 Corinthians 9:6,7
 - E. Investing our lives for eternity. John 12:24,25

- III. QUESTIONS TO ASSIST IN LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE.
 - A. What is happening?
 - B. What does this remind me of?
 - 1. Is this a similar and same experience?
 - 2. Is this a similar but different experience?
 - 3. Am I responding to this person because they remind me of someone else?
 - 4. Am I responding to this person the same way but this person has changed?
 - C. Does this remind me of any Bible characters or stories? 1 Corinthians 10:1-13; Romans 15:4
 - D. What specific Biblical principles apply? Matthew 4:1-11
 - E. What am I feeling? Proverbs 4:23
 - 1. Sadness.
 - a. What have I lost?
 - b. Is my heart becoming better or bitter? Ecclesiastes 7:2,3; Romans 5:1-5; James 1:2-5
 - 2. Joy.
 - a. To whom do I give credit and appreciation for my joy? James 1:17
 - b. Am I learning to develop longsuffering, contentment, joy, and gratitude in all circumstances? Romans 5:1-5; Philippians 4:11,12; 1 Thessalonians 5:18; Ephesians 5:20

3. Anger.
 - a. Why am I angry?; Psalm 4:4
 - b. Am I angry because you remind me of me? 2 Samuel 12:1-7; Titus 3:10,11
 - c. Did someone push my “angry button”? Acts 22:19-24
 - (1) When was this button installed and what or who energizes this button?
 - (2) How long do I want to keep it active?
 - (3) What was the emotion that prompted my anger? Mark 3:5
 - d. How do I want to direct and use my anger? Ephesians 4:26,27
4. Fear.
 - a. Why am I afraid?
 - b. Who or what do I doubt? Mark 4:35-41; Mark 4:40; Hebrews 13:5,6
 - c. How do I need to grow in love? 1 John 4:18
5. Guilt.
 - a. Why do I feel guilty?
 - b. Is this real or general guilt?
 - c. Is this in answer to prayer? Psalm 139:23,24
 - d. Am I ready to release my guilt or do I want to hold on to it? Acts 22:16; Acts 8:22; 1 John 1:9
- F. Why do I react as I react? Psalm 51:6
- G. Who told (taught) me to respond in this way? Genesis 3:9-13; Genesis 2:24
 1. Is this a matter of principle or preference?
 2. If it is preference and not principle, would another choice be better?
- H. Is this the right (Biblical) way? Proverbs 16:25; Jeremiah 10:23; John 12:48
- I. Is this the best (wisest) way?
 1. Have I prayed for wisdom? James 1:5
 2. Have I worked for wisdom? Proverbs 2:1-5

IV. WHY IS IT DIFFICULT TO LEARN NEW AND BETTER THINGS?

- A. Hard hearts, deaf ears, closed eyes. Matthew 13:9-17
- B. There may be a veil of entrenched thoughts. 2 Corinthians 3:1-18
- C. “I can’t believe my eyes because what I see contradicts what I have always been told and what I believe.” Acts 10:9-16; Acts 10:28,34,35
- D. New aspects of truth come with difficulty when a prejudice is being replaced. Galatians 2:11-14
- E. What is the solution to learning?
 1. Be open to new ideas. Acts 17:11
 2. Be committed to truth. John 8:31,32

Conclusion:

- A. What have you learned?
- B. What is truth?
- C. What do you need to do in view of what you have learned?