

# Train Up A Child

August 28, 2022

Welcome to the Beamsville Church of Christ Online Ministry. Services are presented on YouTube, Facebook and our website one week following recording. This week's message is titled Train Up A Child. Thank you to Don, Jim and Glynnis for being part of the video. The scripture reading is Matthew 28:18 to 20 and Colossians 1:28.

## Welcome, Announcements, Prayer

Good morning, everyone. I'd encourage those who are still in the foyer to come in and take a seat and begin our time together. This morning was with a few announcements have a couple of birthdays coming up this week. Josh and Bonnie are celebrating. We also have Dianne is putting together a new church directory. So if you have any information that has changed or or if you're new and would like to be-- like to have your contact information out to everybody, you can email her and and she'll get that put together in the next little bit. We are celebrating in a couple of weeks with with Lindsey and her fiancÃ©. They are having an open house here to to introduce Daniel to everyone. So, so please plan to, plan to attend that on September 10th. And then the following week is the Community Care Annual Food Drive. It is the 33rd annual Food Drive. So please make make a plan to set aside some food to pick up something specially for that week. And, and they are looking for volunteers we did it. We've done it for the last couple of years and it is a really rewarding day. So you can you can visit the community care website to find out more information and to register for that. We have a couple of a couple of announcements. We have some extremely good news.

Jack is home from the hospital! He has been he has been in there for for a couple of weeks. He and Marie now have in addition to his cancer that he had before. Now they are learning how to deal with diabetes and all the complications that go with that. So please pray for them as as they learn how to do that, but also praise God that he is home. He doesn't have to be in the hospital anymore. And we also are praying for the James family. Tina's father passed away yesterday. He was ill with pneumonia. Not for very long, I don't think. And and so please pray for them and and keep them in your thoughts. That is a that is a heavy thing to to have going on. Let's let's bring these things and more to God in prayer. Now, Lord, thank you for this time we can spend together. Thank you for our family gathered here. Thank you for our family gathered everywhere around the world. All of our brothers and sisters, United in your name and in your praise. Thank you for this great privilege we have of coming directly to you and knowing that you will hear us. That when we ask for your ear, you are always ready. You are right there, Lord. We mourn with Tina and with her family. We are. We want to be a comfort to them as much as we can, and we know that true comfort comes from you. So please put your hand on her and on the rest of her family to guide them through this time. Oh, God. We rejoice at Jack's healing and that he is able to be back in his regular surroundings. That will that will help him to get back to feeling like himself again. Thank you for strengthening Marie, as she has been dealing with with back and forth to the hospital and all the complications with that and we we pray that you will restore them to their their regular things that they like to do and that you would do just put your your hand on them as well to to give strength and comfort and patience, Lord, as we as we spend this time together, raising our voices in song, lifting hands in prayer, we ask for your presence to be with us, and we ask for your

guidance for those who are speaking and sharing thoughts that they would remember what they have prepared and bring us words from you in Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

## Communion

Good morning, everyone. We welcome you to our time of communion. There are a variety of churches that offer a unique culture when it comes to worship. Many of the churches of Christ we kind of follow the same pattern. But I remember when I was first preaching, starting preaching for a church in Indiana, I was kind of blown away by the culture of communion that was there. Generally, I grew up in a time, and some of you can remember these times as well, that when someone would come up and share communion, there would be somewhat of a lengthy comment, maybe 10 minutes or something like that, but always bringing us back to why we have communion, his body and is shown in the cracker, or when it comes to the shed, blood, some some juice. But it's unique now. It's done in a variety of places and in a variety of times because there are comments about it. But when I first started preaching in Portland, Indiana, every Sunday, generally a person would come to the front and say, We are now having communion. Communion represents the body of Christ and the blood of Christ. And that was it. That's just the way it was done. And it was meaningful. It was helpful. But me being a young minister, I was preparing a sermon that would last 20 minutes. It's like, Oh no, I'm going to have to preach for 40 minutes there just to hang in there. I'm not doing that today, but it's just a reminder that when we gather together, it's always the celebration of Jesus, no matter what has been happening in our life is happening in our life.

It's a reminder that Jesus is bringing us back to the center, and sometimes we can pull ourselves away because of life's troubles, difficulties, relationships, financial disasters. And sometimes I'll just be honest. The last thing you want to do is to be with a group of people who are going to be happy because of faith. If you're not that way. But one of the things that we notice is if you make yourself be part of a fellowship, no matter how disastrous life is treating you, communion will bring you back. It's a center. It's a place of. God created me. He knew the exact time in place in which we would live. And he promises, I will never leave you. I will never forsake you. I am always with you. And I know that you may not feel my presence on occasion, but I am always with you.

Had a conversation with a person the other day and a very angry person, and the person said, I don't believe in God. And the only comment that I could give back was, I know, but God believes in you. You. God believes in each one of us. It is somewhat important to be selfish with your relationship with God, no matter what's happening in your life. Always remind ourselves God said, I am with you always. Hang on to him. Paul stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said, Men of Athens. I see that in every way. You are very religious. For as I walked around and look carefully at your objects worship, I even found an altar with an inscription to an unknown God. Now what you worship is something unknown. I'm going to proclaim to you the God who made the world. And everything in it is the Lord of Heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands, is not served by human hands as if he needed anything because he himself gives all people life and breath and everything else.

Let's pray, our father. We thank you so much for loving us, for knowing us, for pouring out your heart into our lives. And when we waver with belief, we know that you believe in us. And now, as we take of

this cracker and use representing Christ's body and blood, we participate with each other. And in Christ we say thank you. Amen.

## Reading

Morning. My scripture reading this morning is from Matthew 28, 18-20 and Colossians 1:28, Matthew 28, 18 to 20. Then Jesus came to them and said, All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always to the very end of the age. Colossians 128. He is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ.

## Message

Good morning. Good morning. I got all my accouterments hoping this will fit my glasses in case I can't see you because I have bifocals. And if I look up and down, I might get super dizzy. My mints in case I cough. This teaching stuff. I'll tell you, it's been a while since I taught. But I'm thrilled to be here this morning and. And to have a little opportunity to talk a little bit more about some of the ideas that I've brought for the last few communion talks that I've had. And so I'm kind of building on that. And I called the sermon train up a child. And so I want to begin with Matthew 20:18 to 20 again.

Then Jesus came to them and said, All authority in heaven on earth has been given to me. Therefore for you, all of us go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you to the very end of the age.

So today I'm going to be talking about mostly about parents, grandparents and children. But if you aren't in a situation where you're parent or grandparent or have have children, I think you'll find that a good portion of my message also applies to friendships, to work, and to the heartaches of living life in general. So I invite you to make those accommodations in your thinking if if you're not a parent, grandparent. Or or. Have. I was going to say puppies, but no, it doesn't work with that. I became a Christian just after my second child was born in 1986. So been kind of a long time. And in those days, the church that I belonged to had a very narrow view of who was a Christian and who wasn't a Christian. And so I was cheered as a parent by this scripture, which I will say is a little bit like it. I've I've studied it out a lot. I can't say even now that I have a full understanding of it, but I was married to what the church at the time considered to be a non-Christian. We're not even going to go there about what I think these days. But in first Corinthians seven verses 13 and 14, it said, And if a woman who has a husband who is not a believer and he is willing to live with her, she must not divorce him. For the unbelieving husband has been sanctified through his wife and the unbelieving wife has been sanctified through her believing husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean. But as it is, they are holy. Of course, children are holy. They are. Children are so amazing. So they are. They are holy, holy beings.

In in Proverbs 22, verse six, it says, In my version, start children off on the way they should go. And even when they are old, they will not turn from it. The older versions says train up a child in the way he should go, and when he was old, he will not depart from it. And we were very much taught that, you know, if you did this and this. This. And this, then your kids would grow up to be believers. And, you

know, as I used to say in my day, peace, love. Bobby Sherman. Like, it's all kind of tied up in a nice little bow. I and we know this and we do believe it that when, you know, when we train up a child and and lead them in the ways of the Lord, that God will do amazing things. But life happens. Maybe you can relate. And we find ourselves living out this faith in entirely new circumstances, and they're very scary. Sometimes I wonder if there's anyone here who has ever struggled with thinking, Am I, am I or was I a good enough parent? It's like I don't know about you, but it like plagues me. Even when we're believers, we doubt ourselves. We think, Am I a good enough Christian? Do I serve enough? Am I loving enough? And so on. I think this doubt is a good thing because the Bible teaches us that these times are filled with devils masquerading as demons with seemingly good circumstances that hide Satan's work. But also, sometimes we doubt because we simply don't know. So here's an example.

When when I was again, I was I was part of a of a church that had some fairly narrow views. And there was definitely we were taught to spank our kids. Now, I had a kid, okay, my son. Oh, my gosh, that child had a will that was just beyond. And I spanked him a lot. We've kind of we've kind of joked my my one of my best friends and I it's like this kid, honestly, probably would have grown up to be an ax murderer. He was just he was tough. I did my very best to never spank him in anger. It was hard. It was hard work. I worked really hard at not spanking him in anger. I worked very hard at work. This is this is what's expected. And but I spanked a lot today. Evidence shows that that kind of discipline is terribly destructive. I should have loved better. I should have loved deeper. I don't to this day, I don't know. I don't know how I would have handled that kid. He was hard work, was a good enough parent to not. My daughter became a Christian on January 30th, 2000, actually. I think that's wrong. I think it was 1999, a year later, she was dressing in black head to toe and was very committed to being a bad girl. Okay, She looked like goth. The child was complete and total goth like talk about the black sheep of the family. She was literally dressed in black, head to toe to be the bad sheep of the family. So when we left Hamilton and I think this is this is this to me is like the the it was like one of those moments where I did a complete double take. I've got this child who's like run amok. She's like, I honestly, the stories that I could tell you about the things that she did would curl your hair.

But when we left Hamilton, the church in Hamilton, to come to the church in Beamsville, we sat we sat her down and said, I just want to let you know that we're we're going to be leaving. Hamilton And she's like it was like she blanched. I've never seen in my whole life someone blanched, she blanched. She said, You're not leaving God, are you? And she was serious. Like it like to this day. And when I think about it kind of gives me the chills. And I like did a double take because I'm thinking like, what difference would it make to you? Your life is so far away from the life that you committed. But I said, no, we're we're just going to be in thank goodness. I don't know what I would do, but it's like, okay, we're making a difference. We're making a difference. It doesn't look like much, but we're making a difference. And and my son still, he's deeply committed to never becoming a Christian. But the the boy prays all the time. So there's just so many things to, you know, to carry us through.

So one of the things that my friend Guy Hammond teaches in his ministry is to always, always, always be there with our kids. And we talked about that. There was a slide I described to you about all the things that we say no to as Christians. It what for me, what it really is important is remembering that we have to build a bridge with our kids when we go through those times. And again, this applies to friendships and so on. It's building those bridges even when they're just not there. Like they're not. You're so not lining up with what. I hoped or. Believed or wanted to have happen. But we have to we have to go way, way, way out of our comfort zone. And I think that's if we're ever going to have a

conversation with them that matters, that's really what's going to you got to have that relationship to have that conversation with them. So and it really does mean putting our beliefs on hold and our comfort level is on hold. We just have to wait for God to plant those opportunities to speak into our kids lives, how he's going to do it truly is a profound mystery, but he finds his ways. It's amazing. I think one of the things that we have to think about, I know that I have to think about and I know that that John has had to work with, too, is God always works a way, works out a way to challenge some of the beliefs that sort of we always have done it that way. And sometimes we even studied it out like ten years ago, 20 years ago, 30, 40, whatever. And we know that this is the right way to do it. And we've always done it this way. We really have to deal with that kind of thinking. It's it is a profound mystery for us, especially when we've studied something out really deeply and come to a conclusion that that is a righteous conclusion.

But still, it's like but it's not meeting our kids where they're at. And we need to trust that God can do that. It's all about keeping those lines of communication open and, and really, really, that trumps everything. It trumps it trumps all the things that we've studied out and nowhere in Guy's ministry, you might not be familiar with his ministry, but he has a ministry for same sex-, same sex attracted people and the families that live with them. Nowhere does. Is it more important than in that kind of a situation because, boy, that really I mean, it just goes against it's the lines of communication. We're not it doesn't mean we're giving our blessing to all the things that they're doing. And they know that that's the part that that reaches into my soul. They know that we don't need to tell them again. We've lived our lives. Our lives are our testimony. They know, but they still need our relationship. They need they almost need to borrow on our relationship with God in order to get through their lives.

I was really, really, really moved by Paul your message of several weeks ago from first John, where Paul talked about living like Jesus, loving each other and not loving the world, which is the lessons that that he revealed to us from First John that he'd been studying and that each one points to the others. It's a radical- That's a that's a radical belief in our our parenthood. And grand parenthood calls us to a really radical belief and a really radical living out of that belief. But Jesus did that when the woman was caught in adultery and was set upon by the community. By the community that she lived in. Jesus didn't go with the traditions of the time or with the dictates of the culture of the time. In fact, he even went about against the Leviticus teaching, which I looked up in Leviticus 20 verse ten If a man commits adultery with another man's wife, with the wife of his neighbor, both the adulterer and the adulteress are to be put to death. So what they were doing was legit. It was totally legit in their in their culture. It was totally legit in their teaching. It was totally legit in their Bible study. Or rather, Jesus showed us what was more right, not loving the world means not loving what it looks like on the outside. And that's hard. When Jesus asked the woman at the well to give him a drink, he most certainly went against everything. That was the culture of the time, and she pointed that out to him, but he saw an opportunity to make an impact in the lives of others, and he stepped way outside of that cultural box to bring his message of love to her and to the community, that she was a part of, John 4:41 says. And because of his words to the woman at the well and to the rest of the community, many more became believers. So again, not loving the world means not loving what it looks like on the outside, not loving the world which points to living like Jesus and loving others often means learning to become comfortable with not knowing the outcome and with being willing to live with seeming contradictions.

Like Imagine being the parent of a gay child. It looks like, you know, I'm well, can I live in my home and I've got their, their partner that's that's coming. It looks like oh, so-and-so must be all about gay

people. It's not that. It's not what it looks like that matters. What loving them is, what matters being and it is it's uncomfortable to live with those seeming contradictions and looking at what other people may think it really involves having that really deep trust, that God, that if we have a radical love for our world loving children, because some of them are they're very world loving that we're going to have the biggest statement of faith to those same children. We we can't love the protected world that we've made for ourselves here in our church community. So much that we shun our children. I mean, I've even heard of people, like, not speaking to their children. It's like really, really pull them in, pull them in, pull them in. We're having an impact no matter what.

God even orders our commitment to obeying everything Jesus commands in and in Matthew 22 and Mark 12, he says, Oh, I'll pull this out to read it. The most important command Jesus can answer to them is this: Hear, O Israel, the Lord, our God, the Lord is one love the Lord Your God, with all your heart and with all your mind and with all your soul and with all your strength. The second is this Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no greater command than these, and it's of tantamount importance. I want to give you an example of a radical love that one of my best friends has done. She does some teaching with guys ministry. Her daughter has been in and out of gay relationships and in and out of heterosexual relationships. Yeah, she's a she's one of those ones that we say, oh, my gosh, our kids, she has worked for years in the sex trade as a stripper. Okay. Just saying. Just saying. And she I mean, she had this exact same tough decision to make. It's like, okay, what do I do with this? What do I do with this? And she made the decision, you know what? Nothing. Nothing. If I believe Matthew 28, 18 to 20, if I believe the scriptures, nothing is more important than my children and making disciples of my children and preaching out or teaching at or blah, blah, the law isn't going to do it. And so she loved deeply. In fact, one year at Christmas time, she had all of her daughters, all of her daughter's friends come for Christmas dinner because they had families that wouldn't talk to them, didn't want them. So they all went to Kathy's house and she always laughs. It's like that was the year she had stripper Christmas. And it's like, you know what? That really is going beyond. Going way beyond. But it's not about our comfort, right?

So what do we do, though, with that kind of discomfort? What does the mother, the father, the grandparent do when a kid reveals that they're gay or they're divorcing or they're living with their partner or they're taking drugs or they're pregnant or several of those things because they match up together really well. What do we do with our heartache? What do we do when we just can't even think of a way to love our children? Well, what if God reveals to us and we realize that the way our kids are is because of the mistakes we made as parents, or because of a persistent sin that we have or a sin of omission that we committed. It's real. It's real. Of course, we should pray, but this is where the body of Christ comes in. This is where the body of Christ comes in. Talk about it, share your brokenness over your mistakes are obviously it has to be done with someone whom you trust very deeply. But share that share your heartbreak, all of it, all the hurt, teach each other, teach each other. I'm not telling you anything new today. Teach each other. This is what we need in these times because our hearts are breaking. Teach each other as you wrestle through it together. Don't hide your ineffectiveness from your trusted brother and sisters. It's God's tool through the Holy Spirit moving in their wisdom to encourage you. Colossians three verse 16 (another 3:16!) I notice in verse "a" says, Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, God's tool each other. Colossians one, verse 28. He, meaning Jesus is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching

everyone with all wisdom so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ. This is how we mature.

It's this interweaving of our pain, our grief, our overwhelmed ness with the Body of Christ. And I'm not saying every single person in the body of Christ, I'm really not saying that. But those trusted people like really bury your souls to them because they and we and we will do it in time three friends and we do this all the time. We are back and forth together with one another all the time, just sharing our griefs, our sorrows, our our pains. And what's so amazing is that at the end of all of that, so often we come back together and we we say, well, first of all, we say, oh, our kids, oh, our kids. But we come back together and we say, Thank God I don't have to do this alone. Thank God I've got God walking beside me. Thank God I've got Jesus walking beside me. Thank God I have you walking beside me Loving me, teaching me, reminding me, spurring me on. I want to share with you one of my favorite scriptures. This is so I call, I call that kind of back and forth sharing our faith. I learned that it was sharing our faith with nonbelievers. But I think as important, maybe even more important is sharing our faith with one another. This is one of my favorite scriptures. I just love this scripture, Isaiah 43 versus 1 to 2 and 5 to 7. Do not fear for I have redeemed you. I have summoned you by name. You are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you. And when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire you will not be burned. The flames will not set you ablaze. Do not be afraid for I am with you I will bring your children from the east and gather you from the west. I will say to the north, give them up and to the south. Do not hold them back. Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth. Everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made the story of our children and their lives, is not over. Even after we die, the story is not over. They are holy. They are holy to God.

They are. They are His treasure. They were created it and formed before the Earth. They are so important. Faith, after all, is being certain of what we do not see. No one wants are sanctified and holy children to come to faith and to grow the faith they have more than God does. He wants them. We have prayed and prayed and prayed for them. God is faithful. So as we were going to listen to a song now and as you listen to it, I invite you to to consider the words of this song from the perspective of a hurting parent or grandparent, or even as a friend as you listen to it.

## Closing

What then, shall we say in response to these things, if God is for us, who can be against us? Who shall separate us from the love of Christ, shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine and famine or nakedness or sword or danger. I lift up my eyes to the mountains. Where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the maker of Heaven and earth. He will not let your foot slip. He who watches over you will not slumber. Indeed, he who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord watches over you. The Lord is your shade at your right hand. The sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon at night the Lord will keep you from all harm. He will watch over your life. The Lord will watch over your coming in, going both now and forever and more. Know therefore, that the Lord Your God is God. He is the faithful God keeping His covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love Him and keep His commandments. The Lord bless you and keep you, Lord, make his face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord turn his face towards you and give you peace. Amen. Have a good week.

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