



Kirknewton and East Calder Parish Church of Scotland

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Reflection: Rev Dr André Groenewald

Reading: Proverbs 3:1-18

Reflection

Good morning to all the children. Today we are celebrating back to Sunday school. I hope you are excited as I am that the Sunday school is going to start again next week.

I also hoped you did listen to the bible reading because the reading in the bible was like a Christian school lesson where the teacher is talking to his pupil, telling him how to be happy in this life.

Do you want to be happy? Yes we all do. But as the teacher explains there are rules from God that we must obey. There are only 7 golden rules that we must follow namely:

1. We must read and obey God's word in our Bibles. We must really try hard to read from our bibles as often as we can. This is also why you will be coming to Sunday school, to learn more about God;
2. We must be good to other people. We must show everyone around us love, compassion and support. We must not be selfish, we must share everything we have, even our dearest toys!
3. Only trust in God. He is the only one who can help you;
4. Do not think you are brighter than God. Remember He gave you the brains and the ability to study. Use them but remember who gave them to you;
5. We must give God gifts which reveal our thanks and gratitude for everything He does for us, like being honest with our parents and teachers, to be helpful whenever someone is needing our help and friendly to everyone;
6. We must trust God in the good and bad times of our lives. Sometime horrible things will happen to us like our parents who

divorce, friends who are rude to us but we must tell God about them and trust Him to know He will make our situations better!

7. If we follow these rules, God promises us that we will never ever be alone. He will be with us always and everywhere - in the darkest alley, in the loneliest place of the garden, house or school, in the worst possible situations:
 - when school bullies threaten you,
 - when your mother and father are screaming at one another and you lie alone in your bed hearing it all, frightened and anxious,
 - when you are ill in your house or in hospital,
 - when you are crying your heart out because of something that has happened to you,
 - when your dearest grandfather or grandmother dies;
 - when your parents' divorce;
 - when your brothers and sisters are rude to you;
 - when you do not know which way to turn – God will be there!

The rules are easy to remember. It is like packing your schoolbag in the morning. I need some volunteers please!

First of all:

1. Make a card with your favourite Bible passage to put in your school bag. Psalm 23 is my special one. Read it through the day whenever you have time to spare!
2. Pack in your lunchbox - if you are not eating at school, and remember to pack one for someone who is less fortunate than yourself. Always look out for people who are poor or in need of your help, if you do not pack a lunchbox ask your mother or father for a few extra pennies and save up to buy someone else a meal;
3. Pen – remember God wrote your name in His book with pen. No one can erase your name. You are His child and you can trust Him!
4. Obviously some books if you are a bit older. Do remember that God gave you the brains and ability to study! You must do your best in school and Sunday school!
5. A thank you card for someone who was really nice to you. Remember then too say thank you to God for all His love for you!

6. Hopefully you also have a bag, which show some wear and tear. But the important bit is that although it looks worn out, you can still use it. Remember then that sometimes bad things do happen to us. We also suffer some wear and tear but we do manage to get on with the help of God. He is the only One who can help us when bad things do happen to us.

7. Put a wee stone also in your bag: you put it in your hand when you feel anxious or scared. Just then think of Jesus who once said: I will be with you always and ever. You are not alone!"

What is not in my bag?

A pencil and an eraser....why?

In God's bag there is no need for both of these. He does not need to write our names with pencil to erase them later. No, everyone is special to Him, no matter what we do; He loves us and will try and try to convince us to turn our lives around for the better. Whether we want to know it or not - our names are written with permanent ink in His book of life. No one can separate us from His loving care!

For the adults this morning: I think the message is quite clear. We must in all our ways acknowledge Him, and He will make our paths straight, not meaning that we will not endure suffering or hardship but when it happens we will not be alone! We do not celebrate in our tradition of faith - a progress theology whereby God lets some people be in terrible car accidents and others – seemingly Christians unharmed. No one is exempt from suffering. Not even those who think they are the super Christians. But we know this world is not our destiny. Our suffering reminds us that we are still on earth and not with God. Let us go from here and live the love that God had for us all in Jesus Christ.

Amen