

“¹ Give ear, O my people, *to* my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth. ² I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old: ³ Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us. ⁴ We will not hide *them* from their children, showing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done. ⁵ For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children: ⁶ That the generation to come might know *them*, *even* the children *which* should be born; *who* should arise and declare *them* to their children: ⁷ That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments: ⁸ And might not be as their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation; a generation *that* set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not steadfast with God.” (Ps 78:1-8)

This Psalm was written many years after the death of David, perhaps, when the kingdom had been divided and the ten northern tribes had descended into unbelief and apostate worship of the golden calves and the false temple at Samaria. But these words are for us, rather than them, as Paul tells us in 1Corinthiaans 10, we unto whom the ends of the world are come. David Dickson makes four observations and these four major things are worth repeating and I will do so this morning, but make them my own and say them my way. 1. The prophet had made God’s word his own. Vs.1,2. 2. The words revealed mysteries that could not be known except by the words. 3. It was very ancient doctrine that had been known, transmitted through the ages, and this was the ordinary way of its transmission. 4. The doctrine was the hope of the people of God, and there is no other.

Let us look more closely at these four things and then make application concerning them.

I. The four things.

A. The prophet had made God’s word his own.

1. You cannot convince someone else unless you are convinced yourself. The promises of God are to become part and parcel of your own intellectual furnishings. Only the engrafted word is able to save our souls; not the word speculated about. We must embrace the Gospel.
2. Many people ruminate for years and never give themselves up to the Gospel, but always hold something back, refusing to commit. It reminds me of a song that was popular many years ago; “I’m looking for an angel, but angels are so few; So until the day that one comes along, I’ll string along with you.”
3. The commander of military troops must not vacillate and cogitate in the thick of battle. It is impossible to weigh all the alternatives, but his training and experience must be such that he can make decisions quickly. Even a poor decision can be effective if made quickly and decisively.
4. Young people, you must think things through while you are young, make informed decisions, and commit your life to them.
5. What a joy it is, when you know that what you teach is the word and truth of God. It can be known and you can have confidence; but it will come only because you have sought the truth; you have bought the truth, and refused to sell it.
6. As Paul wrote: “I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.” He could also say, “Be followers of me.” Not because his doctrine had been invented by him, but because it was the truth of the words of the Lord Jesus and the prophets that had gone before.

B. The words revealed mysteries that could not be known except by the words.

1. I will open my mouth in a parable. Vs. 2 The rest of this Psalm is a history of Israel. It is true history, but it is also the revelation of things which could not be seen. I Cor. 10: 6, 11 Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.... [He then lists their sins] ... 11 Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.
2. The things of creation are visibilizations of the things that cannot be seen. History and creation are real, but are physical realities that we sense with our physical senses, but they point us to things which cannot be seen, but are seen, heard, felt, tasted, and smelled by the senses of the soul. It is the pure in heart that see God, who is revealed in everything around us.
3. It is important that we teach our children, not only the Bible, but how to see the Lord Jesus in the Bible, and how to see God.
4. The words carry the meaning. It is not a hidden meaning, but lies in the words themselves, but you must have eyes to see and ears to hear. Illustration: Jesus gives us the water of life, if we drink we shall never thirst. The woman of Samaria wanted the water so she wouldn’t have to come carry water anymore.

- C. It was very ancient doctrine that had been known, transmitted through the ages, and this was the ordinary way of its transmission.
1. See Titus 1:1-3 1 Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness; 2 In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began; 3 But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Savior;
 - a. It is truth believed by the elect of all ages
 - b. It is after godliness: according to the true nature of God.
 - c. It brings the hope of eternal life; not the riches of the world.
 - d. It is from God who cannot lie.
 - e. It is promised before the world began: Who did God make the promise to before the world began?
 - f. It is manifested by preaching. Paul knew he was one of those to whom the message was committed.
 2. It was passed down through all the ages of the world. From the time of Moses it has been committed to writing.
- D. The doctrine was the hope of the people of God, and there is no other. Verse 5-7.
1. This testimony concerns the Lord Jesus: "10 He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. 11 And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. 12 He that hath the Son hath life; *and* he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. 13 These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." (1Jo 5:10-13)
 2. They are to be diligently taught, so that they can teach them to their grandchildren.
 3. The hope is that they will do better than their fathers have done.
 - a. The failure of the fathers is not excuse for the failure of the children. Verse 8
 - b. This assures that revival and new life is always available, because the testimony is established in the church.
 - c. The Bible cannot be destroyed, for heaven and earth may pass away, but the word shall not pass away.
 - d. There is hope for the future. Do not let your failures multiply. Teach, teach, teach. David's failures did not keep him from teaching; Solomon's failures; We point not to ourselves, but to Christ.
 - e. The doctrine we teach may expose our own failures, but we teach it anyway, because it is not ours, but Christ's doctrine.
- II. The Application.
- A. Let us not be weary in the task before us. Our work is not in vain. For we have the promise of God. Many of them; but one very precious is in Isaiah 59: 20 And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the LORD. 21 As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the LORD; My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the LORD, from henceforth and for ever.
- B. Let us renew our commitment every day, to make the words our own, and study them, to meditate on them, to be changed by them, to teach, teach, teach.
- C. Let us not hide them from our children:
1. We hide them by not following ourselves.
 2. We hide them by neglecting to teach them; provide opportunities to learn. The main obligations of mother and father.
 - a. To provide for children physically, emotionally, and intellectually.
 - b. To teach them an occupation so they can earn their own living.
 - c. To teach them the testimony; the doctrine and history of the church.
 3. We hide them by our carelessness and drift, taking the easy way, being undisciplined and careless in the things of the Lord. Time must be set aside for each of the things mentioned above. Physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual teachings.
 4. We want them to do better than those who have gone before, that the church might be renewed; and kingdom of God come, as we are about to pray in the Lord's Prayers.

May God bless you. Amen and Amen.