

LEARNING  
FAIRVIEW TEXAS CHURCH OF GOD  
MAY 8, 2010

When we stop learning, we basically stop living.

We walked in to visit my grandmother when she was about 90 or so. We found her reading her Bible. The first thing she said was “I don’t know how many times I have read this book, and I always seem to find something new.”

I want to spend today talking about 5 aspects of learning. Our ability to learn is a matter of our frame of mind. If you will bear with me, I want you to think of the word “chest” and connect that learning is a matter of the heart.

**Deuteronomy 4:**

- 9 "Only take heed to yourself, and diligently keep yourself, lest you forget the things your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life. And teach them to your children and your grandchildren,
- 10 "especially concerning the day you stood before the LORD your God in Horeb, when the LORD said to me, 'Gather the people to Me, and I will let them hear My words, that they may learn to fear Me all the days they live on the earth, and that they may teach their children.'

**Deuteronomy 5:**

- 1 And Moses called all Israel, and said to them: "Hear, O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your hearing today, that you may learn them and be careful to observe them.

**Deuteronomy 17:**

- 18 "Also it shall be, when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write for himself a copy of this law in a book, from the one before the priests, the Levites.
- 19 "And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn

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to fear the LORD his God and be careful to observe all the words of this law and these statutes,

**Matthew 11:**

- 28 "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.
- 29 "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.
- 30 "For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

Our first principle of learning we will call curiosity.

This definition of curiosity for the purpose of relating to learning was part of a class given at EDS. Curiosity is the active seeking to uncover the limitations of your theories, ideas and assessments so you can improve.

Learning must be actively sought out. Children learn in a natural way – by asking “why” about everything. Later in life, we adults teach them how to stop learning

**Deuteronomy 4:**

- 29 "But from there you will seek the LORD your God, and you will find Him if you seek Him with all your heart and with all your soul.

**Proverbs 1:**

- 5 A wise man will hear and increase learning, And a man of understanding will attain wise counsel,
- 6 To understand a proverb and an enigma, The words of the wise and their riddles.
  - Learning is seeking the answers to a riddle

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*Proverbs 8:*

- 17 I love those who love me, And those who seek me diligently will find me.

*Proverbs 25:*

- 2 It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, But the glory of kings is to search out a matter.

*Matthew 6:*

- 31 "Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'"
- 32 "For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.
- 33 "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

*Romans 15:*

- 4 For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.

Our second principle of learning we will call humility.

For our purpose today, we define humility as having the belief that your theories, ideas and assessments of the world are always incomplete.

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*James 1:*

- 7 For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord;
- 8 he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.
- 9 Let the lowly brother glory in his exaltation,
- 10 but the rich in his humiliation, because as a flower of the field he will pass away.
- 11 For no sooner has the sun risen with a burning heat than it withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beautiful appearance perishes. So the rich man also will fade away in his pursuits.

*Romans 12:*

- 16 Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion.

*1 Peter 5:*

- 5 Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble."
- 6 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time,
- 7 casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

Elisabeth Kubler-Ross was the first scientific person to ask people what they were experiencing when facing death. The stages of the cycle as she published in *On Death and Dying* were experienced in this sequence: denial, anger, bargaining, depression and finally acceptance. In the person who lives wanting to constantly be learning, this cycle continually repeats itself.

**Denial** – You don't believe something to be true

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**Anger** – You get angry when you become convicted that it is true

**Bargaining** – You try to get around the truth by compromising. In the people Kubler-Ross was studying, the bargaining was often evidenced in prayers that God heal them AND they will do something in return.

**Depression** – You don't see any way around the truth

**Acceptance** – the only stage where you truly learn to accept the facts

I have been aware, logically, of this cycle for many years. Yet, I have only recently understood some applications that I had not realized. If you read my blog on our web site posted this last Thursday, you will note its application to marriage.

Our third principle of learning we will call empathy.

For our purpose today, we define empathy as actively seeking to understand others' views of the world and listening for coherence.

**Proverbs 18:**

- 13 He who answers a matter before he hears it, It is folly and shame to him.

**Leviticus 19:**

- 9 'When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not wholly reap the corners of your field, nor shall you gather the gleanings of your harvest.

**Matthew 25:**

- 45 "Then He will answer them, saying, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.'

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- 46 "And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."
  - When you show empathy for others, you are honoring Christ

**Galatians 6:**

- 1 Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted.
- 2 Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.
- 3 For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself.
- 4 But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.
- 5 For each one shall bear his own load.

**James 1:**

- 27 Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.

**James 5:**

- 13 Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms.
- 14 Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.
- 15 And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.
- 16 Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

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- 17 Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months.
- 18 And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit.

**1 Peter 3:**

- 8 Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous;
- 9 not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing.

Our fourth principle of learning we will call self-esteem.

For our purpose today, we define self esteem as truly knowing yourself, being confident and feeling comfortable with who you are.

**Genesis 1:**

- 26 Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.
- 27 So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.
  - If we are made in His image, then we must be a fairly good creation

**Leviticus 19:**

- 18 'You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.

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- The assumption in this commandment is that we first love ourselves
- This commandment is quoted often in both the Old and New Testaments

***Romans 12:***

- 1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.
- 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.
- 3 For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.
- 4 For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function,
- 5 so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.
  - If we can't sing, that doesn't make us less of a person
  - If we can't repair a sprinkler system, that doesn't make us less of a person
  - Whatever gift God has given us, we are to use it to the best of our ability – and to continue to learn how to improve on it.

We need to love our self first, but we are not to put our self first

Our fifth and final principle of learning we will call trust.

For our purpose today, we define trust as the understanding that people are always doing the best they can based on their individual and current model of the world.

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**Proverbs 3:**

- 5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding;

**Proverbs 22:**

- 17 Incline your ear and hear the words of the wise, And apply your heart to my knowledge;
- 18 For it is a pleasant thing if you keep them within you; Let them all be fixed upon your lips,
- 19 So that your trust may be in the LORD; I have instructed you today, even you.
- 20 Have I not written to you excellent things Of counsels and knowledge,
- 21 That I may make you know the certainty of the words of truth, That you may answer words of truth To those who send to you?

**Proverbs 28:**

- 25 He who is of a proud heart stirs up strife, But he who trusts in the LORD will be prospered.
- 26 He who trusts in his own heart is a fool, But whoever walks wisely will be delivered.

**Micah 7:**

- 1 Woe is me! For I am like those who gather summer fruits, Like those who glean vintage grapes; There is no cluster to eat Of the first-ripe fruit which my soul desires.
- 2 The faithful man has perished from the earth, And there is no one upright among men. They all lie in wait for blood; Every man hunts his brother with a net.
- 3 That they may successfully do evil with both hands-The prince asks for gifts, The judge seeks a bribe, And the great man utters his evil desire; So they scheme together.
- 4 The best of them is like a brier; The most upright is sharper than a thorn hedge; The day

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of your watchman and your punishment comes; Now shall be their perplexity.

- The day of your watchman is the Day of the Lord – the end times
- 5 Do not trust in a friend; Do not put your confidence in a companion; Guard the doors of your mouth From her who lies in your bosom.
- 6 For son dishonors father, Daughter rises against her mother, Daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; A man's enemies are the men of his own household.
- 7 Therefore I will look to the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation; My God will hear me.

**Hebrews 13:**

- 18 Pray for us; for we are confident that we have a good conscience, in all things desiring to live honorably.

So we know for sure where we are to put our trust, but how does this relate to our definition as it relates to our learning? It lies in the act of judging. When we judge others, we are making assumptions about their knowledge and intentions. In fact, we do not have that ability.

**Matthew 7**

- 1 "Judge not, that you be not judged.
- 2 "For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you.
- 3 "And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye?
- 4 "Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me remove the speck from your eye'; and look, a plank is in your own eye?
- 5 "Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.
  - The Bible tells us that even the faithful can be deceived.
  - We must realize that we can be wrong
  - Solomon tells us that no one can know all of God's ways
  - We each have the responsibility to live according to how the holy spirit leads us
  - God will hold us responsible in the final judgment

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For a young person growing up in a ghetto environment, stealing hubcaps may be “normal”. For you, today, be trusting of God. And be trusting that others are doing the best they know how.

Remember the learning concepts of ‘CHEST’:

- CURIOSITY
  - This is most likely the calling of God
  - But we must have an openness to new concepts
- HUMILITY
  - We must recognize that we don’t know everything
  - We must be willing to “unlearn” what we think we know
  - This may be the most difficult stage
- EMPATHY
  - We must care for others
- SELF-ESTEEM
  - But we must first care for our self
- TRUST
  - We need to trust in God
  - We must avoid judging others

And remember the learning cycle:

**Denial** – You don’t believe something to be true

- Do you remember when you first heard about the Sabbath?

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- If you are like me, I denied it to be true.
- I often got upset when a neighbor would mow the grass on Sunday morning
- But I went to pro football games

**Anger** – You get angry when you become convicted that it is true

- The second step in learning about the Sabbath was to be angry with those religious leaders who know the truth about the Bible's teaching about the Sabbath but didn't teach it

**Bargaining** – You try to get around the truth by compromising. In the people Kubler-Ross was studying, the bargaining was often evidenced in prayers that God heal them AND they will do something in return.

- The third step in the learning process included some bargaining
- This may take the form of trying to atone for past sins
- This may be the step where legalism steps in and a person may take the Sabbath observance to legalistic extremes

**Depression** – You don't see any way around the truth

- In the fourth step, one may get depressed by focusing on what else they don't know
- One may actually revert to wondering if it is all worth the effort

**Acceptance** – the only stage where you truly learn to accept the facts

- Once we accept the Sabbath as a Biblical fact, we can move on
- The next step is generally going through the same cycle regarding the Holy Days
- As each major concept is accepted, the cycles get shorter and shorter and we get to acceptance much faster

IT'S OUR ATTITUDE THAT ENABLES US TO LEARN!