

The influences and examples we set in our lives

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[0 : 00] Will you turn with me this morning to the 11th chapter in Ecclesiastes? Ecclesiastes chapter 11 and verse 6.

In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand. For thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good.

This morning, if the Lord may help me, I'm going to be somewhat practical in my remarks, because it is a very important position we all are in.

I'm in a very important position in being the professed instrument of God in preaching to you the Word of God.

You are in a very responsible and accountable position of being where the truth is preached. And the Lord sends forth his Word to sanctify and prepare souls, feed souls.

[1 : 25] For the Lord himself, in the parable of the sower, says the Word is the food of the sheep. And what a mercy if you and I have a spirit of hunger and thirst for spiritual things as we come into the house of God.

It's not a place of religious entertainment. It's a place of spiritual communication. We have in exercise this morning the means of grace established, given, and owned and blessed of God for many, many generations.

Yes, we can go to the Old Testament and we can find those instruments which were signally used of God to speak in his name, but to write also the truth under the power and influence of the Holy Spirit.

So there's no book to equal its benefit upon the face of the earth like our Bibles. And we do desire that we may have a hunger for the truth and that we may have an appetite to receive whatever is sent.

Sometimes the bitter words of reproof and correction when our Heavenly Father sees that we need chastisement. Sometimes he chastises us through the course of the ministry, course of the sermon.

[3 : 01] And that wonderful word that was of salutary blessing to King David when Nathan went to him and said, Thou art the man. Oh, my friends, there is a great blessing in the attention of a Heavenly Father when he sends a word of reproof, a word of correction to show to us where we're wrong and where it would be to our advantage spiritually.

And very often allied to the spiritual is temporal circumstances because the Lord uses various means to bring back to himself those that wander far from him and to awaken those who yet may be dead in trespasses and strangers to the workings of God to salvation in the heart.

What a mercy it is to have a living understanding of the greatness and presence of God through the means of grace to instruct us, to lead us and guide us into those ways that shall be to our rejoicing to a never-ending eternity.

Well, now the word says, in the morning sow thy seed. This is the word that's been upon my heart to preach from this morning.

In the morning sow thy seed. We have a word for the young. Those that are in the morning of life.

[4 : 48] What a wonderful thing. It is to see things in their correct setting. Their true perspective.

The days of youth.

There is a certain liberty in youth. And again, there is a certain liberty in the fact that those that are older have been younger.

And they have a memory of things that are past. They have recollections, sometimes painful in retrospect.

But they also have some experiences that are very, very pleasant and profitable to have received.

[6 : 06] And like a leaven in a loaf of bread. Sometimes the leaven of past experience is sanctified and brought to our minds afresh.

And we find the influence of past blessings to be of present use in the guidance and in the things which we allow and the things which we disallow by the grace of God.

Well now, Cast in the morning sow thy seed.

In the morning sow thy seed. Young people, Young people, Let me address a few remarks. You have a Sunday school teacher. And I've got every reason to commend his teaching.

And that he's a man that fears God. And there's women that fear God that are employed in Sunday school work. And we bless God. And I would say this.

[7 : 17] As a father, I was favoured by God's grace to baptise our three daughters.

And our three daughters, in bringing their testimony before the church, Each one could refer to blessings they'd received under the ministry of a good lady who was leader of the ladies' Bible class at Abenezer Old Hill while I was the pastor.

She was a sister of the late Mr. E.G., the late Mr. Leslie Rowell. And some of you that are older will remember Mr. Leslie Rowell.

Well, Mrs. Burgess, her name, Grace Burgess, was a sister of Mr. Leslie Rowell of that generation. A gracious woman.

A gracious woman. Her influence was tremendous in the fellowship of church and congregation at Ebenezer at that time.

[8 : 33] And I could thank God in my secret returns of help that I received through the instrumentality of that day.

So when our daughters came before the church, each one had a particular experience to relate that was the fruit and effect of Mrs. Burgess' teaching.

And all that was, it was a wonderful thing. And it excited in my heart a little jealousy that perhaps they'd been more blessed under Mrs. Burgess' teaching than they had under my ministry.

But that didn't do me any harm. Anything that humbles us is profitable to us. But nevertheless, the Lord blesses the teaching of Sunday school teachers, Bible class leaders, and especially God-fearing parents.

God-fearing parents. They can be a great means of spiritual blessing.

[9 : 48] And often when we're reading obituaries of the saints that have been exercised under God to record their experiences, we find that mothers had an influence spiritually upon the hearts and lives of the children.

And we have also the fatherly care that was exercised and administered in the lives of some of these old saints.

And in the morning sow thy seed. Look, there's a responsibility in parentage that we can find sowing seed, sometimes as the sower has need of long patience, yet we can have some evidences in later life that the seed we sowed with a desire for spiritual well-being among those that were younger has brought forth fruit.

And it's under God's blessing been a great help. And it's a comfort when you can look back over life and realize how the Lord has sanctified the hearts of our young people and set their feet in the ways of truth and of righteousness and salvation forever.

Now, none of us can dictate to God who he will bless, how he will bless them. He's an absolute sovereign.

[11 : 38] He does as he will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. Nevertheless, if God has placed you, young person, in a home where the Bible is recognized as the word of God, the standards, as it were, of conversation and not wanting for some spiritual influences that are constructive for your guidance and the emulation in your manner of life.

Oh, what a wonderful blessing it is to be born into a godly environment. None of us, none of us have any influence as to who we were committed into their hands to bring us up and to set us in those ways that are profitable spiritually as well as naturally in the course of our life.

We have much instruction, fathers, mothers, wives, husbands that, as it were, concentrate attention upon the administration of affairs within the home and children, don't forget you have an accountability to give to God for what you do.

The way you treat the influences that God has directed for your benefit or that God may bring you into such a condition where you've blessed God for making you a member of a Christian family, a member of a society, a so-knit society, where the things of God and of godliness are recognized, practiced, and taught.

In the morning sow thy seed. I'm trying to sow seed of encouragement to our young people. What a blessing it is to fear the Lord in the days of our youth.

[13 : 57] I believe, and I've said this perhaps to you before, but I would say it to the glory of God, I believe that God entered into my heart and my life when I was nine years old.

And I look back with great gratitude to that undeserved beginning of a gracious God with a wretched sinner.

The Lord knew the future. The Lord knew the multitudes of unworthy thoughts, words and ways that would stain my life with sin.

But nevertheless, he that hath begun a good work in you will perform it unto the days of Jesus Christ. There's not such a thing as the Lord beginning a work of spiritual work in the heart of a young person and then at length forsaking it.

If the Lord begins a work to save your soul, the Lord will have your soul saved. And there's no power in you and the sinful nature that you've inherited there's no power in a sinful world.

[15 : 20] There's no power in a sinful home even with the close proximity of influence that that brings into our experiences. My friends, all shall come and last and end as shall please our heavenly friend.

But what a blessing it is in the morning sow thy seed. Oh, we would use the opportunities that are given to us to say to the young people you're not too young.

You're not too young to learn the things of God, the ways of truth. You're not too young to pay regard with a sense of accountability to the creator that's made you and placed you in his providence upon the earth.

Well now, in the morning sow thy seed. We're sowing parents, Sunday school teachers, neighbours, friends, young and old, what seed are we sowing?

What influence are we exercising? Is there a spiritual content in people being brought to know us, to spend time with us, to hear what we have to say and to realise that youth is a very impressionable area of our sojourn here below.

[17 : 21] We learn so much, my friends, and I've often said the mind of a young person is like a sponge. if you put dirty water, put a sponge into dirty water and wring it out, you'll get dirty water.

If you put a sponge into clean water and wring it out, you'll get clean water. My friends, let us all, in view of this strange approach this morning, let us all realise that we're having an influence, we're shedding an opinion and that the young people take, or should take, notice of the example, conduct, compensation of those that are older and what a mercy if they can turn aside in secret and thank God for the influences they have been given through the channels to which I've so casually referred in my little talk to you this morning.

In the morning sow thy seed. In the morning sow thy seed.

And another thing is we should use opportunities. sometimes opportunities are given to us to, as it were, pass a word or voice an opinion to those that may not have the advantages that have been given to us.

they're in ungodly homes. They're swearing, telling lies, all sorts of malpractice, evil influence is common in the home.

[19 : 37] But what a mercy if sometimes just as it were a short sentence can convey a great meaning. and what a wonderful thing if someone that has been as it were apparently forsaken to that environment which is harmful has to make acknowledgement that I heard you say so and so.

No, it did make an impression on my mind. I shall never forget it to the day that I die. What what a service to that person and what a service before God in the ministry of just a casual remark if not a more extended conversation.

In the morning sow thy seed. Sow thy seed. Oh my friends let us seek to sow good seed.

good seed. Let us seek that God will so help us that people though they may despise us they must acknowledge that we are careful in what we say and what we do because the fear of God is in our hearts and the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

In the morning sow thy seed. Opportunities. Opportunities. Opportunities. Let me let me just put this again to you in the context of the family and the home.

[21 : 36] It's a short while that families remain together. There seems to me the need of a special emphasis on the fact.

Take advantage of the opportunity while your children are particularly dwelling with you and are under your influence and your care.

Oh, don't let that pass without, as it were, acknowledging the need of grace to speak and act graciously that you may have a constructive influence on the minds of your children as they so soon grow up, as they so soon spring up with the opportunities and benefits of mature age.

in the morning sow thy seed. I do think, my friends, and I'm going to turn for a few minutes to the consideration of the influence within the fellowship of the Lord's people.

I believe that even the world expects certain standards to prevail among the Lord's people. And if, as it were, a discordant reaction reaches their ears, they will speak about it.

[23 : 23] I never expected to hear that spoken. I never expected that attitude to prevail. You know, one of the, I can't just remember which of the pen, in the New Testament it was.

I think it was the Apostle Paul, probably to the Corinthians, that he says about loving one another in the church, in the fellowship of the Lord's people.

Loving one another. that if a stranger comes in and they find discord, immediately they would hold a question whether this can be a place under the influence of the Spirit for the Spirit, Spirit's influence is that you should love one another, that you should pray for one another, that you should bear one another's burdens, that you should, as it were, identify yourself with those that may be even looked down upon by the world in general.

You're not ashamed, as it were, to be a member of that body of Christ, though you may feel to be such a feeble contributor to the healthful action of the whole.

My friends, the world have an opinion of what should be in a Christian church, and although they may be disappointed in many professed places of worship, there's a discord between what is the true standard of church life, and the situation that they find when they go through the doors as comparative strangers to the fellowship.

[25 : 30] Oh, what a mercy. If our conduct as a fellowship is a reaffirmation in their hearts of what the word of God has to say about the position and condition prevailing among believers in Jesus Christ.

One of the great necessities, because the church is made up of people with weaknesses, we need charitable forgiveness, loving approach.

Not to harbor and nourish bitternesses, but to love one another and to seek prayerfully and practically as it were to overcome any dissentient spirit that causes coldness, prayerlessness, even criticism to exist in the heart or hearts.

Well, no, in the morning, so that. In the morning is an early opportunity, isn't it? So that I see. So that I see.

Oh, my friends, let us consider what we're sowing in the life and spirit that we're giving in the family and in the church of God.

[27 : 24] There's a constructive side to life. There's a destructive side to life. and nothing was more constructive to life than the spirit of Jesus Christ from the stable to the grave and I should say to his ascension into heaven.

All was constructive. What a mercy if we are possessed of his spirit in some small measure because he surely is the example that we should ever seek to emulate as Christian men, women and children.

Now, in the morning, sow thy seed. And I want to just touch the next point, which is in the evening, withhold not thy hand.

We have an opportunity through life to sow seed.

We find, and I'm a very clear example of the fact that when we get older, we cannot do what we did when we were younger.

[29 : 07] And I've often said in our birthdays, in our early lives, if somebody hadn't have cared for us, we would have perished.

God in his wisdom put us into the care of those that loved us and did for us those things that were essential to the promotion of life and to the increase of physical and mental strength.

We thank God again for those in a godly frame who did their best for us in the physical area and the spiritual area of our early existence.

But when we get old, we begin to need care again in a multiplied sense.

We can't do what we did. and there are opportunities given in the evening as well as opportunities in the morning.

[30 : 24] I would say for the advantage, practical advantage of the fellowship, it's a great thing when there is a practical effort present to supply the needs of those who cannot rise to a requirement as they did years ago.

And as you do without any particular effort in your present sphere of life's way.

You're young, you've got a clear mind, you've got facilities at your disposal that are associated with middle life, if you like.

And that area has got a responsibility especially toward those that are elderly.

people and I am a very strong supporter of those institutions wherein the care of the needy and poor of this world is in evidence in a more public way.

[31 : 51] but the good wise man says in the morning sow thy seed and in the evening withhold not thine hand.

God gives rewards to those that are ready helpers. a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple does not lose its reward.

I would say again to the young as well as to those that are older there's such a thing as sowing and reaping. Remember you sow in the years of your youth what you may well have to live to reap in the evening time of life.

If you have been conscientious under God's guidance and opportunities afforded in the outworkings of your life before him you've sown good seed you've done for others what you could to help them lift them over the stiles and see them safely through the many requirements of age and dependency as it were as it returns in the evening of our life.

But you're putting in store you're sowing eventually to reap what a wonderful thing it is when we get to the reaping stage in age to realize that God has not forgotten but in many ways he's commanded his blessing in recognition of the principle of his word that whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap if you become selfish in your youth and said oh well let him get on with it I haven't got no time I've got too much to do and especially maybe in a practical way you can do little things for them that are of great benefit to them well attend to it because the day will come when some little things are needing attention and you just can't rise to do it well now it's wonderful if somebody comes along and responds to a call

[34 : 43] I had a young man this last week I was stuck with a job I'm not going into the nature of it but I was trying to do something practical in the home and a screw was rusted right down the core of the screw and I was in such a difficult position that I couldn't get to it I hadn't got the tool that was needful a young man from the chapel got in touch with him on the phone came and my wife said in five minutes he'd got it off well he just got the right approach and he got the right understanding I stood and watched and felt very humiliated that I couldn't do it now like I would have done years ago but there it is sowing and reaping well the principle here then is in the morning sow thy seed and in the evening withhold not thine hand oh do what you can do what you can be a practical

Christian don't be somebody that is known to go to the chapel full stop known that you live the life that as the Lord in his holy word gives wise and gracious suitable counsel to us in the various stages of life well let's be practical and attend to it for thou knowest not whether shall prosper this or that or whether both shall be alive good it's in the hand of God it's in the hand of God and God blesses those that serve him God blesses those that being sanctified through the truth seek to attend to the things he would have attended to thou knowest not with us shall prosper now I've sown some seed here this morning

I've spoken to you in affection and desire for your welfare here and now and in the future the future time and the future eternity you've got a soul I've got a soul oh let us seek the welfare of our immortal souls by paying attention to the word of God's truth and grace may the Lord forgive anything that I've said amiss for his name and glory's sake amen am aur amen that I've amiss tant ofâs ce c'est cast