

In our previous session, we left off as we began to look at the second major commitment the son needs to make. By way of quick review, the first major commitment is to the education (learning). The 3 components of that commitment are:

1. Honest Attendance
2. Interactive Learning
3. The Top Priority

These 3 components are identified by the “if thou” clauses in vv. 1-4, with the result of having those measures (“then shalt thou”) being given in vs. 5.

Proverbs 2:1 My son, **if thou** wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; ² So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, *and* apply thine heart to understanding; ³ Yea, **if thou** criest after knowledge, *and* liftest up thy voice for understanding; ⁴ **If thou** seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as *for* hid treasures; ⁵ **Then shalt thou** understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God.

The second major commitment is to the edification (effectual learning). Just as in the commitment to learning, there are also 3 components to the commitment to effectual learning. It is easy to spot that there are 3 separate sentences in this section leading up to the “then shalt thou”. This time, instead of “if thou,” it “the LORD” or “He” that starts off each component.

Proverbs 2: ⁶ For **the LORD giveth** wisdom: out of his mouth *cometh* knowledge and understanding. ⁷ **He layeth up** sound wisdom for the righteous: *he is* a buckler to them that walk uprightly. ⁸ **He keepeth** the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints. ⁹ **Then shalt thou** understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; *yea*, every good path.

That means the Lord is the one who will accomplish these things to produce the effectual working within us. Now, before we move through this passage, I want to talk to you about “effectual working”.

It is true that the words “effectual working” do not appear in the text, but we are using terminology for all of these components that are accurate descriptions, but are not part of the text. What is being described by the LORD giving wisdom, knowledge and understanding, by Him being a buckler and by Him keeping the paths of judgment and preserving the way of his saints is the “effectual working” of His word in the inner man.

But even though the words “effectual working” do not appear in the text, they are, however, in your Bible. Let’s go to I Thessalonians 2 and look at the term.

As a context, Paul is writing to the Thessalonians; often referred to as the “model church.” And they were. They are advanced in their education as sons and Paul only has words of praise for

them in the opening verses of the book. In chapter 2, Paul talks about thanking God for the Thessalonians because they received his writings for what it was; the word of God.

1 Thessalonians 2:13 For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received *it* not *as* the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which **effectually worketh** also in you that believe.

But notice that Paul also says that the word of God “effectually worketh also in you that believe”. Notice that the effectual working is for those that “believe”. If you recall from our previous session, I told you that you would be called upon to believe some things without any tangible proof and even in the face of opposition.

Effectual working is the job of the Spirit, but it will not take place in anyone who does not believe what the word is saying. I also mentioned an example to you of those who deny that the word has the power to produce godliness. They will invent their own form of godliness and persuade people that theirs is the way to true godliness, while at the same time, denying that the living word of God has the power to effectually produce godly thinking, godly living and godly labor; i.e. godliness!

2 Timothy 3:5 Having a form of godliness, but **denying the power thereof**: from such turn away.

But let’s get ourselves back to the I Thessalonians verse.

1 Thessalonians 2:13 For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received *it* not *as* the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which **effectually worketh** also in you that believe.

Notice the word is not “effectively” worketh...”. What is the difference between “effectively” and “effectually”? Firstly, something that is “effective” is that which accomplishes its intended purpose. While that sounds like a good thing, it is worth noting that the word “effective” is not in your Bible; not even once. When God does something, it is more than just “effective,” He always does that which is effectual.

“Effectual” is a more intense form of “effective,” in that, whatever is “effectual” is not just successful in accomplishing some purpose; it is beyond that.

That which is Effectual not only accomplishes its designated purpose, but it carries an additional 3 elements that take it beyond “effective.”

These 3 elements are:

1. It is final and conclusive – as far as accomplishing its purpose
2. It cannot be improved upon
3. It is not to be substituted for

When you encounter doctrines in the Bible, those are for the purpose of producing something in you. When the word of God produces its intended purpose, it does not just do it effectively, but it does it effectually. That is to say that the word of God has the power to produce its intended purpose in a way that is final and conclusive, in a way that cannot be improved upon and in a way that is not to be substituted for.

For example, there is doctrine in the Bible that is meant to produce a peace in your soul, no matter what circumstances you may be under. But would it surprise you to know that you can peace from lots of other places? Psychologists and other practitioners have a number of ways to relieve anxiety and produce an inner calm. Even eastern mysticism has rituals meant to bring peace to its practitioners. Counselors have devised many ways to help people deal with adversity, the pressures of life, anxiety, adverse circumstances, fear, worry, nervousness, etc.

Jesus Himself acknowledged that the world has ways to produce peace for people and many of those ways are “effective,” but they are not effectual. To see what Jesus says about this, let’s go over to John 14. The context is Jesus speaking to the members of the little flock. He is preparing them for the coming day of wrath by giving them His peace.

John 14:27 Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: **not as the world giveth,** give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

Jesus told His disciples that He is going to give them peace so they will be able to handle the events in the day of wrath. But what we are really after is the fact that Jesus says that the world can give peace too. His peace is “not like the world’s peace,” but He does not say that the world cannot give peace. And He doesn’t say that the world’s peace is not effective. To some degree, the world can give peace that is effective. It happens every day. But, you can get peace from more than one place.

What the “eleven” are supposed to realize from this is that there is only one “effectual” way for them to have peace. There are 2 effective ways, but only one of them was effectual; the peace that Jesus gives them.

Some things you should always be aware of are:

- There is a substitute for everything God has to offer you
- Some of these substitutes are offered by the world at-large
- Others of these substitutes are offered by Satan’s policy of evil
- The substitutes may be effective, but they can never be effectual
- What God offers you is always effective and effectual

Take, for example, our ambassadorship. There are lots of way to motivate people to be an ambassador for Christ; that range from guilt trips to other things that have nothing to do with 2 Corinthians 5 & 6, and they are “effective” to some degree. If you are under these, you may well

get out there and witness, but it's not the way God has designed for you to do it. God has designed a particular doctrine to effectually work within you to produce the attitude, the love, the ambition and the enthusiasm for you to be the ambassador for Christ that He has privileged you to be.

There is no need for run down a list of things that God's word is designed to produce in us. Suffice it to say that God has already determined everything you will ever need and provided doctrine for that. He has also provided for the Spirit to take that doctrine (the written words on the pages of your Bible) and effectually work to produce peace in you, or to produce your ambassadorship, or any of the other things God knows we need.

Because what God does is complete and cannot be improved upon, you are not supposed to substitute anything for it. You are to believe those doctrines in His word and let them effectually work in you.

Generally, there are some aspects of "effectual working" you need to be aware of.

1. God's designed His word to effectually work to produce things in you for this dispensation of grace
2. God also designed His word to effectually work in Israel's program to produce things for the nation of Israel
3. There are 2 stages to the effectual working of God's word

These 2 stages are given in Philippians 2.

Philippians 2:12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. **13** For it is God which worketh in you **both to will and to do** of *his* good pleasure.

So what is it that God is "working in you?"

- Stage 1 is to get you to "will" to do what he is talking about.
- Stage 2 is to tell you how "to do" it in a way that honors and pleases Him.

You could say that the effectual working of the word of God in your inner man gives you the "desire" and the "power" to _____. You fill in the blank; the desire and power to have peace in the midst of adversity, the desire and power to be an faithful ambassador, the desire and power to....whatever the intended purpose of the doctrine is.

Now, let's return to the primary subject matter of the 2nd major commitment a son must make. To do this, we will go back and look at the exhortation. Just to set this up before we read this again, before your Father describes the details of your vocation in the heavenly places and the opposition you are going to face, etc., He is going to give you some information so that you can

intelligently commit yourself to the whole education's effectual working. This way you can say, "This thing that I'm committing myself to, I can trust it completely."

That means you have no doubt about it. You aren't questioning whether or not it will do what it says it will do. You are trusting it totally and you fully expect it to produce in you what your Father says it will produce.

Proverbs 2:6 For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding. ⁷ He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: *he is* a buckler to them that walk uprightly. ⁸ He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints. ⁹ Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; *yea*, every good path.

Look back at verse 7:

Proverbs 2:7 He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly.

What do you think of when you hear the words "He layeth up..." Forget for a moment that He is talking about wisdom. No matter what it is, when you "lay something up" for someone, what are you doing? Aren't you putting it away or "storing" or "reserving" it for them?

For a son that is being exhorted to his sonship education, how does it make you feel to know that God has a particular wisdom that He has "laid up" for you? If something is "laid up," don't you get the idea that it's not just laying out in open for anyone to access it? It's as though God had this wisdom and He put it away. Then you come on the scene and you are told that He has this wisdom that He put away for you. It's like He was waiting all along for the right person to come along before He would go to the top shelf of His closet and pull down this wisdom that He reserved just for this occasion.

Now, there is something else in verse 7. You run into a term that you don't see very often. It's the word "buckler." And it is this word that sort of "pulls the curtain back" to reveal why this exhortation is so important. This is really the first time that you are told about the Father and His wisdom doing something to defend you against an adversary.

A buckler is a shield, but more than that, it is a specialized kind of shield. Knowing what a buckler is and when it comes into play for a soldier is going to give real meaning to what you are reading in vs. 7. You should know from this verse alone that whatever it is that you are getting yourself into, it is going to include an attack from an adversary and I'm evidently going to need this buckler.

But don't let that frighten you, for what does the verse say? He is a buckler to them who walk uprightly.

Proverbs 2:8 He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints.

When we discover all that is included in these phrases and terms, the idea is for you to have perfect confidence and assurance that He is going to do just what this says He will do. In other words, you will be called to believe Him without reservation.

Proverbs 2:9 Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; yea, every good path.

Actually, the exhortation does not end here, but it continues down through the rest of the chapter. We are only going to read it down to vs. 20 as vv. 21-22 have to do particularly with some Israel program issues.

Proverbs 2:10 When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul; 11 Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee:

Now, when it says that you are going to be “preseverved” and “kept” from something, you might well ask this: “Preserve me from what?” or “Keep me from what?” The next vs. has the answer.

Proverbs 2:12 To deliver thee from the way of the evil man, from the man that speaketh froward things; 13 Who leave the paths of uprightness, to walk in the ways of darkness; 14 Who rejoice to do evil, and delight in the frowardness of the wicked; 15 Whose ways are crooked, and they froward in their paths:

But there is another character to be delivered from and we find this in the next verse.

Proverbs 2:16 To deliver thee from the strange woman, even from the stranger which flattereth with her words;

Just to insert a comment here, the “strange woman” is the religious aspect of what is coming against you.

Proverbs 2:17 Which forsaketh the guide of her youth, and forgetteth the covenant of her God. 18 For her house inclineth unto death, and her paths unto the dead. 19 None that go unto her return again, neither take they hold of the paths of life. 20 That thou mayest walk in the way of good men, and keep the paths of the righteous.

Verse 17 are talking about the functional death that results from following the “strange woman.” Now, instead of looking at 3 measures that make up the commitment to effectual learning, we are going to look at some components that the Father will be looking to see achieved in the son, so that both the Father and the son will know that all this actually working.

You are going to have to make a commitment to the edification. How will you do that? By believing what is written on the page. Look again at the verse in Thessalonians and see the requirement for the word to effectually work; on who does that word effectually work?

1 Thessalonians 2:13 For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

To get back to the point, in this 2nd commitment to the edification, God your heavenly Father will call on you to believe something when it seems that everything that is going on around you dictates otherwise. In other words, you are going to be called upon to put implicit trust in what your heavenly Father tells you. Can you do that?

This is where your trust (or faith) is going to have to be of such a nature so as to be “GREAT FAITH.” This isn’t the first time He has asked you to do this. We encountered a similar issue back in Romans 4:19 in connection with Abraham.

And you may not remember it, but was almost 1 year ago to the day (March 20) that I told you that this issue was going to come up again. Well, today is that day. I told you back then that there was something that was going to come up in your sonship life in which you were going to be called upon to count God so trustworthy that when He says something to you, in spite of all the things that tell you to the contrary, you will be fully persuaded and fully confident that what He says to you is true.

Well, with that in mind, look back at where we were a year ago when we first came upon this issue. Realize that Romans 4 is talking about Abraham.

Romans 4:17 (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were. ¹⁸ Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be. 19 And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb: 20 He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; 21 And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.

Back when we studied justification, we looked at the 4 adjectives that describe faith: weak, strong and great, little. In the passage we just read, you can find two of them.

Before we locate them, let’s set up the guiding principle behind the combinations and uses of these terms. The fundamental issue in “LITTLE” or “GREAT” FAITH is that, only someone who already is justified unto eternal life and has got their education and edification underway, can be spoken about as having either “little” or “great” faith. Faith, as an edification issue either brings about a reprimand (“little faith”) or a commendation (“great faith”). Therefore, “little” or “great” faith does not have to do with saving faith, it has to do with matters of faith for a person AFTER they are JUEL (saved).

When it comes to describing saving faith or any kind of faith issue previous to being justified unto eternal life, (that is, for an unsaved person) then the issue with faith is either “WEAK” or “STRONG.” These are the 2 that are mentioned in our passage.

In this second major area of commitment, you are going to be called upon to have a “great” faith, especially in connection with Level I, Phase 2 (and ever increasing on and on) in your sonship education. In fact, in this dispensation of grace, you are going to be called upon to believe what your Father says which is contrary to an issue that occurs in Israel’s program. In Israel’s program there were physical indicators of a person’s relationship or a person’s spiritual condition and in this dispensation of grace, you don’t have those. Israel truly did walk by sight, we, however do not; we walk by faith.

Just to make sure I haven’t confused you, you are going to be told something that runs contrary to the ways things working in Israel’s program, and one of those things is: in this present dispensation of Gentile Grace, are living in a period of time in which there are no outward indicators that either gives us evidence of or attests to our spiritual condition.

Your physical health is not an indicator of your spiritual health. Neither does your ill health indicate that you are spiritually sick. Your financial well being is not an indicator of God’s favor with you and your financial ruin is not an indicator of God’s displeasure with you. There are plenty of people who make gobs of money that care nothing for God or the Bible and visa versa.

When the “check oil” light comes on in your car, that isn’t God’s way of getting your attention, it your car’s way of letting you know your oil is low. I know this kind of teaching makes people angry, but I’m not saying to make you angry. I’m saying it because you are going to be called upon to believe this even though what you have been taught, experiences you have had and what you have understood is going to scream at you that this cannot be true. But, if I can remind you, our apostle has written to us that “we walk by faith, not by sight.”

If you enquire, you will find an overwhelming number of preachers who testify that what you are going to be told cannot be true. Almost every book you pick up will declare just the opposite of what you are going to be called upon to believe. You are going to look back upon experiences and what you believed about those experiences is going to run counter to what you about to be told. And you are going to make a choice about what to believe is true. You are going to believe what your Father has written to you or you will believe your own interpretation of an experience. You will take His work or some preacher’s word.

Now why am I making a big deal out of this? Do you suppose I’m just trying to get you to believe like me? No, that’s not why I am pressing this issue. I am saying all the things I’ve said to you because if you cannot BELIEVE what you are going to be told is true and act upon as the truth that it is, THEN THE EFFECTUAL WORKING OF THAT DOCTRINE WILL NOT BE PRODUCED IN YOU. That’s why I’m making such a big deal out of this.

Let me give you an example. Let's suppose you are going through a particular tribulation. God has some doctrine that is designed to produce endurance in you so that you can go through whatever that tribulation might be. Additionally, that doctrine will produce a peace in your inner man all the while you are enduring it. But let's say that you go back to Israel's program and find that when Israel had troubles, it was because of sin and rebellion against God. So you decide, I must be doing something that is not pleasing to the Lord. You pray, you repent, and you confess every sin you know, asking God to forgive you and lift the tribulation.

Or let's say that you go to a preacher and ask him what you should do to get out from under this tribulation you are going through. He will ask you if there is sin in your life, are you "going to church like you should," or are you "robbing God" in any way that would bring His judgment on you. He may tell you to pray and ask God what He is trying to tell you.

But here is the problem; if you do not believe what God says about what He is doing and not doing in this dispensation of grace, then instead of looking for what God is doing, you will be looking for what He is not doing. Instead of looking for the endurance and peace, you will be looking for deliverance. And if you do that, then the doctrine given to you to produce those things (endurance and peace) **WILL NOT EFFECTUALLY WORK IN YOU.**

But the endurance and peace are not just about God doing something because he isn't going to supernaturally remove the tribulation, it is about something much bigger. He is, by doing things this way, producing something in you (in your inner man) that you will have to have to fully function in the heavenly places. What you will get, by that ability to endure suffering and have a peace in your heart the whole time it is going on – and what you will get, as you progress in your sonship, seeing your endurance mature so that you actually begin to "take pleasure" in your sufferings (because you have a better understanding of not only why God isn't delivering you but also what you are getting in exchange for it), and finally, what you will get, having matured to the place that you begin to "rejoice" in your sufferings (now that you have that full measure of understanding of what God is putting on display and how this suffering impacts God's glory) – what you get is not just about "getting by" down here, but what you get is going to qualify you to serve as a son in the heavenly places in a way you could never be qualified if God came along and delivered you from those tribulations.

He would never be able to put that special "something" on display to all of creation if He dealt with you like He did with Israel. There is a glory associated with this (not yours but His!) that would never be given to Him unless you not only went through those sufferings, but that you had that word effectually work in you to produce an endurance and peace, and then it effectually worked in you again to produce a "pleasure" when you endured those sufferings and finally worked in you to produce a rejoicing when you suffer.

I know that God dealt with Israel by miracles, signs, wonders and marvels. I also know that one of the hardest things to believe, that is written in Paul's epistles, is that what God is doing with

the body of Christ is not only different, but it is better, it is greater, it is “more excellent,” it better displays His wisdom, and it brings Him more glory!

I know when I say to you that your part in the effectual working is to believe, and you think that is the easy part. And it is until He asked you to believe something different from what you have been believing. It is easy, until He calls you to quit believing in that “sacred cow” doctrine that you hold so precious that it is going to be a fight as to whether or not you will actually believe the words on the page. You will be tempted to change the words, take them out of their context, deny their meaning or any of 10 other tricks to keep from having to give up what you thought in favor of what He says.

Take my word for it; belief will cost you something. Some of what He is going to ask you to believe is going to humble you. You have nothing but the words your Father tells you that will be the indicator of what is really going on in your life.

In view of all that I have said to you, the issue now is: that you are going to have to TRUST your Father’s words IMPLICITLY! (Having no doubts, no reservations; unquestioning trust!)

But even in all I have said to you, we still have something else to look at with regard to this issue of your edification that makes this such a critical issue for you. It will be within the next Phase of your sonship education & edification (Phase 2 of Level I) where you are going to meet your Adversary; where you are going to ‘catch the attention’ of the Adversary, and where you are going to have to deal with his attempts to victimize you and his aim being to bring your sonship edification to a permanent halt and end.

So, to recap:

The 2nd major issue of Commitment to your sonship establishment is: THE COMMITMENT TO THE EFFECTUAL WORKING OF WHAT YOU LEARN (the commitment to the effectual working of the words and the information and the forms of doctrine that your Father teaches you.)

But there is another aspect of what God is doing with you when He asks you to believe Him about things that are very different from how He dealt with Israel under their program. You see, when God performed miracles in the past, angels saw them all. They saw Him speak the world into existence. They saw Him make from the dust of the earth a living soul named Adam. They watched Moses’ staff become a serpent and then become a staff again. They watched Moses part the waters of the Red Sea. They watched over a million people walk for 40 years as their clothes and shoes refused to wear out. They watched the sun stand still for Joshua. They watched the sun dial go backward 10 degrees as a sign to Hezekiah. They watched a widow feed the prophet Elijah for 3 years from a barrel containing only a handful of meal that refused to run out. They watched Elisha part the waters of the Jordan River and walk across back into the land of Israel. They watched a virgin give birth to a son who would become the Savior of the world. They have seen all manner of diseases cured immediately. They have seen the blind receive their sight.

They have seen a lame man leap for joy. They have seen the dumb speak and the deaf hear. They have seen leprosy cleaned away as though it were nothing more than dust being brushed aside. And they have seen, on more than one occasion, the dead raised back to life.

Don't miss my point in all of this; you want to talk about miracles, you want to talk about power, you want to talk about wonders, my friend, angels have seen it all – well, almost all.

Now here is what I want to say to you. For all that the angels have witnessed, there is something they have never seen. There is a power, a capacity, an ability, a strength and a might of God's character that in all of His workings with Israel, has never yet been fully put on display – and HE HAS RESERVED THAT FOR YOU! And that's what this is going to require.

What angels have never fully witnessed is: the effectual working of God's manifold wisdom, so that His power is built to its highest degree and to its highest level, within the inner man of His sons during this dispensation of grace, and that is done to such a degree that the angel's jaws will all hit the floor when they see what a son can endure when the only thing he is working with, the only thing he is trusting, the only indicator that the son is doing things right and the only thing that convinces the son that there is operating in his inner man, the power of His heavenly Father operating at its highest level – is the black ink on the white pages of that Bible. And folks, that is called the effectual working of the word. And that power is the power of His grace. It can only be appropriated one way; by believing.

The major thing that is supposed to come out of this commitment, the primary result is an implicit trust in your Father's words. (Having no doubts or reservations—unquestioning trust).

Implicit trust in what your Father is teaching you; trust that it is going to do exactly what He says and everything that He says, it's going to do. There will come a point at which you're going to become 'fair game' (so to speak) for the Adversary and you're going to have to have absolute trust that what your Father gives you to withstand those attacks will work just as He said it will.

I'm not talking about "blind faith" or "blind trust". This absolute trust includes a full understanding that your Father has so wisely designed and put together this curriculum, that it can not only meet the objective, but it can actually make you (to use Paul's terminology) "more than a conqueror" in connection with every obstacle; every road block; every stumbling block; every hindrance; every impediment that gets thrown your way.

In our next session, we will look at the remainder of this exhortation in Proverbs 2, where you should perceive something significant about the way it is being presented to you.