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5 MINUTE LESSONS ON THE KINGDOM OF GOD

How I Taught My 4 Year Old to Cuss!

By Russ Richman

I was enjoying the rough, tough and cool lifestyle that was leading me to party hardy USA. Shortly after high school I joined the Navy and got stationed on an aircraft carrier out of Pensacola, Florida. My high school sweetheart and I decided to get married two years into my hitch. We were enjoying the beach life and parties so well, that we decided to put off having children till we would be in our thirties.

On the day of our first child's birth, I was in the delivery room as a coach. The very second our son was born I had two thoughts. The first one was, I could not believe how much my son resembled me and at the same time, I heard myself say, "Boy, am I in trouble now!"

Something inside me knew the battle for my soul just got moved from "Don't sweat the small stuff", to "Holy cow, this is not small stuff any longer."

Fast forward about four years and I am fixing a leaky faucet in the kitchen. The wrench I was using slipped off and fell down into my face. I blew my cool and let out a mighty long foul streak of cursing. With my son nearby and interested in everything his father was doing and saying, he caught every word loud and clear...no more than one minute later I heard my precious little son utter those same, horrible words of profanity. Immediately I had two thoughts race through my mind, "Boy, am I in trouble now!" and, "Did his Mom hear that?"

For the next 24 hours a gentle, but firm Still Small Voice kept speaking to my heart about the disobedient and selfish lifestyle I had chosen to live before my family, and He kept encouraging me to apologize to my wife and children for using such foul language in their presence. But I stubbornly ignored Him.

Sunday morning rolled in and my wife seemed to be extra eager to get to church this day. Once there, I took my son to the toddler's class. When I returned to pick him up, the Sunday school teacher took me aside and asked "Where is your son hearing and learning such foul language? He's even using the Lord's name in vain!" I didn't admit to my son's teacher that I was aware of his swearing, but I was. She also informed me that he had done quite a bit of bullying, and if he had another eventful day as this, it would be the last. On the way home, I mentioned the bullying to my wife and purposely left out the

incident of swearing. Needless to say, between the Sunday school teacher and the Still Small Voice of the Holy Spirit convicting me for the past 24 hours, I truly was distraught about the thought of disciplining and punishing my son who I allowed to be misled and deceived by me, his father.

The prideful, cool fool that I was, still refused to apologize to my son for the foul language I was teaching him, and I mainly pointed out that there was a proper place and time for rough, tough, cool stuff, and that in the home and in school and at church were not the right place for young children to carry on that way. So I informed him that his punishment was for bullying, and that I did not want to hear or see anything that dealt with that kind of behavior for a very long time. After I applied the two, maybe three swats to his backside, I then embraced him with a hug, while my heart was screaming, "I'm sorry! I'm sorry!" I then left the room with my eyes filling up with tears. As I walked just a couple of steps away from his room, I was brought to a complete stop by a force into my chest that I could not identify and then that Still Small Voice spoke up again, with His gentle, but firm voice to my now deeply broken, hard, stony heart saying, "Do not put off any longer your opportunity to turn (to repent) from your rebellious, prideful, lifestyle of doing your own will...to doing God's will...for if you do not, you will be leading your children straight into Hell, following right behind you."

I then felt the pressure released from my chest and I continued into the next bedroom, while still being in a heavy sense of remorse and repentance, I fell to my knees and continued to contemplate on what I still had to deal with deep down in my gut (in my soul). By the grace of God the Still Small Voice of the Holy Spirit was helping me to hear and to understand those loving words of Jesus Himself as He stands with His arms opened wide and calling out.. "Repent of your sins and turn to God, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near" (Matthew 4:17).

As the choice was laid out before me once again, to either accept and follow the Lord Jesus Christ, or to reject and rebel against His Lordship, the choice was mine and mine alone to make.

Well the time to yield to God's perfect grace and God's holy will, was long overdue. While still on my knees in the adjacent bedroom, brokenhearted, I yielded to the Still Small Voice of the Holy Spirit that Jesus' way of righteousness and love was the proper, right way to pursue life.

So by faith, I asked for God's gift of grace and I willingly accepted Jesus as Savior and Lord. He took our sins and rebellion to the cross and paid their debt in full! I could not believe the sense of peace that overwhelmed me.

I no longer look to rowdy things to do, but now my main focus is on striving to serve God and mankind. Dear friends, God's desire is for all mankind to be saved and to enjoy everlasting peace with Him in Heaven. Thank you for allowing me to share how that Still Small Voice of the Holy Spirit is actually God reaching out to us, trying to share His loving-kindness to draw us unto Him.

Questions

- 1** God speaks to us through the Bible, but can He speak to us in a Still Small Voice?
- 2** In Luke 18:11 the religious Pharisee prayed. What was his prayer?
- 3** In Luke 18:13 the sinful tax collector was hitting himself. Why?
- 4** In Luke 18:14 who went home in right standing before God, the Pharisee or the tax collector?
- 5** If you got down on your knees right now and cried out to God from your heart, “God be merciful to me a sinner,” would God treat you the same way He treated the tax collector?

We want to hear from you!

We would love to hear your feedback on these lessons and how you use them in your own study or in discipling others. If you have any thoughts, stories, testimonies, comments, or questions we would love to hear them!

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Answer Key

- 1** God speaks to us through the Bible, but can He speak to us in a Still Small Voice?

“¹¹And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: ¹²And after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice. ¹³And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle...”
(1 Kings 19:11-13 KJV)

- 2** In Luke 18:11 the religious Pharisee prayed. What was his prayer?

“¹¹The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed this prayer: ‘I thank you, God, that I am not a sinner like everyone else. For I don’t cheat, I don’t sin, and I don’t commit adultery. I’m certainly not like that tax collector! ¹²I fast twice a week, and I give you a tenth of my income.’”
(Luke 18:11-12 NLT)

- 3** In Luke 18:13 the sinful tax collector was hitting himself. Why?

He beat his chest in sorrow over his sins. “¹³But the tax collector stood at a distance and dared not even lift his eyes to heaven as he prayed. Instead, he beat his chest in sorrow, saying, ‘O God, be merciful to me, for I am a sinner.’” (Luke 18:13 NLT)

- 4** In Luke 18:14 who went home in right standing before God, the Pharisee or the tax collector?

The tax collector. ““¹⁴I tell you,’ said Jesus, ‘the tax collector, and not the Pharisee, was in the right with God when he went home. For those who make themselves great will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be made great.’” (Luke 18:14 Good News Translation)

- 5** If you got down on your knees right now and cried out to God from your heart, “God be merciful to me a sinner,” would God treat you the same way He treated the tax collector?

“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”
(Romans 10:13)