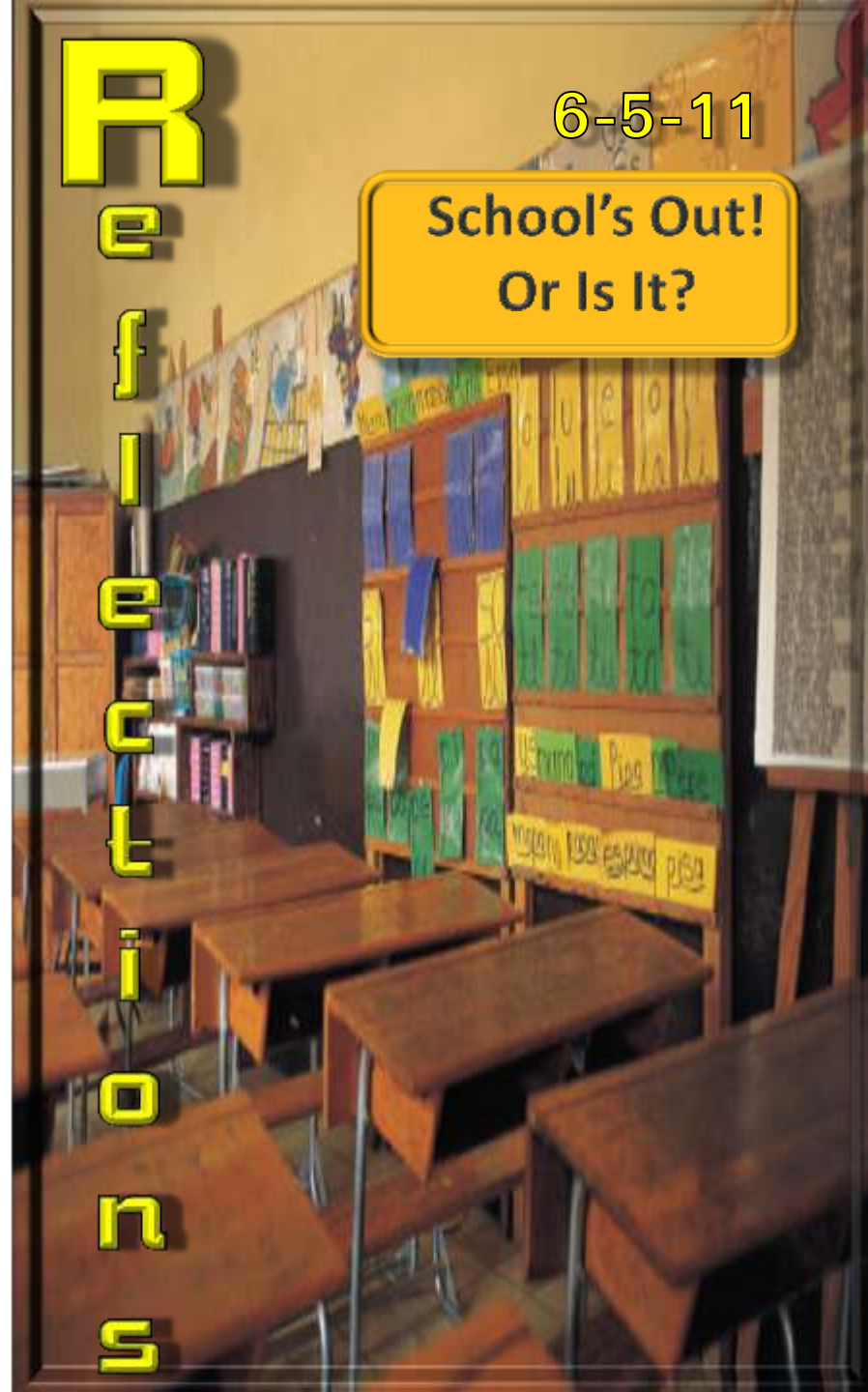


Sermon Notes

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6-5-11

**School's Out!
Or Is It?**





Reflections

No more homework, no more books, no more teachers' upset looks! Summer vacation is just around the corner and the smiles on the faces of the kids get bigger with each passing day. Parents, on the other hand, begin to wonder what they will do with their youngsters all day, every day, all summer long. Schools out! Or is it? Perhaps we need to re-think the premise of a summer without teaching and learning. I'm not referring to Summer School but rather that we look at the special opportunity presented to us to truly get in some quality teaching time as parents who don't usually get to spend this extra time with their kids.

Consider that when we have extra time to share with our kids we can model, teach, talk about, and live out, our spiritual lives and take the time to engage them in spiritual conversation. What an investment of spiritual living can do for our rapidly growing youngsters cannot be over-estimated. They will soon be on their own in a world that doesn't value them as we do and we want to make certain that they are ready to "face the lions" prepared to stand with the Lord. So perhaps school is not out for the summer. The real school of life may just have entered its most important and valuable session.

Sorry kids! School's still in session in the Church and hopefully in your home as well. The text is the Bible, the teacher is the Holy Spirit and His assistants?: your parents. Parents, you do well if you follow Moses' advise. *"You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength."* ⁶ *"And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart."* ⁷ *"You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. (Deuteronomy 6:5-7 NKJ)* What better opportunity to accomplish this advice than summer break? Having God's Word in our hearts and, as a result, sharing with our kids the power and majesty of God as He has made Himself known in what He has created. By diligently teaching and then talking of His power, His grace, and His care for each of us, we can begin to retake the lost ground that the world system has stolen from our young ones.

Often the most powerful message that can be given to our children

is our own life lived in obedience to God's Word. Our children begin life as little mimics. They try to do what mom and dad do and, way too soon, learn to talk like them as well. Have a problem with language? Don't be surprised when you hear such language played back to you out of the mouths of the babes. Have a problem with the truth? Don't be shocked when that sweet little child becomes deceptive. Is going to church optional when you have something better to do on Sunday? Don't be amazed when, as pre-teens and older, you have to wrestle them to get ready for church, and then try to hide your amazement when they abandon church altogether.

Kids learn a language in the first few years of life, learn math and how to write in a few more years, and in that same season of life they learn to value most of the same things that mom and dad value. If toys, then they want them all. If....fill in the blank here, and you will likely see them wanting the same things. If, on the other hand, they learn that you value God's Word, fellowship with other believers, worship of God, and especially your marriage relationships, you will see them value the same things. The old saying: "the acorn doesn't fall far from the tree," is a metaphor that is played out in many families. Children tend to "become" what their parents lives teach.

Well, summer break is just around the corner. The question then is: what will you do with this special contact time you have with your kids? Will your home life be a spiritual school that flows from your own commitment to Jesus, or will other lessons be taught by failing to take the opportunity to examine how our lives and behaviors impact the charges given to us by God? Holding spiritual "summer school" in your home shouldn't be all that different from the rest of the year. If we live according to God's Word our lessons will be continuous and effective and will merely be enhanced by having more time to teach the spiritual principles that govern our lives. What a wonderful time to enjoy our children while we teach! Longer days, "better" weather, BBQ's, and road trips will give us all a greater opportunity for our kids to really get to know their parents, and the Lord they serve.

Even in play our lives can be a testimony of the transforming nature of walking with the Lord as our focus. Kids should see joyful parents loving and enjoying them and including them in the pastimes so prevalent in summer. Schools out! Or is it? **Pastor Doug**