

October 18<sup>th</sup>

**Memory Verse**

**Go ye therefore,  
and teach all nations,**

baptizing them in the name of the Father,  
and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Ghost. Matthew 28:19

These are the words of Jesus. He is telling his disciples what they are to do. These are our “marching orders” if we are Christians. These words have inspired missionaries throughout the ages. Younger children could learn the words in **bold** and understand that what we are to teach is the truth of the Bible: that Jesus came to save sinners.

**A Lesson from Medical History**

No man deserves to starve to pay an insulting, insolent physician ...

Three kinds of people mainly disease the people:  
priests, physicians and lawyers...

Priests disease matters belonging to their souls,  
physicians disease matters belonging to their bodies,  
and lawyers disease matters belonging to their estate.



These were the words of a colourful character, Nicholas Culpeper (1616-1654), who was born on **18<sup>th</sup> October**. Culpeper was Surgeon General to Oliver Cromwell during the Civil War, although his motivation for fighting on the Roundhead side may have been more exasperation at the way medical practice was controlled under the Stuart kings than anything else. What he saw working as a herbal doctor turned him into a convinced **republican**. Why was this?

The medical practices of Culpeper's day seem **barbaric** to modern eyes. Doctors were trained using ancient Latin textbooks which had never been updated with more recent findings. Many of the medicines prescribed were, we now know, poisonous and as we have seen in previous lessons, blood-letting was the cure for almost every ailment.<sup>1</sup> The thing that angered Culpeper most was the way doctors charged high fees for their services and kept any knowledge they had as secret as possible to prevent people treating themselves.

Culpeper had as a youth been interested in the properties of herbs. He had also had access to a large library of books owned by his grandfather which included medical books and books on **astronomy** – and on **astrology**.

Everyone should know the difference between **astronomy** and **astrology**. **Astronomy** is a science. It is the study of the stars, planets, galaxies and other phenomena that make up the universe in which God has placed us. There are many Christian **astronomers**. **Astrology** is the study of stars and planets too but it interprets these, by means of a “secret knowledge”, as having an influence on human affairs. This is not a science. There are no Christian **astrologers**. Christians trust God and his word for all the guidance they need in their lives. The Bible specifically tells us that we are not to look to the heavenly bodies for this type of knowledge.<sup>2</sup>

Culpeper moved from his native Sussex to London where he worked as an assistant to a London

<sup>1</sup> See 4<sup>th</sup> May's lesson.

<sup>2</sup> See Isaiah 47:13-14 for instance.

apothecary, an early kind of **pharmacist**. Apothecaries dealt largely in herbal cures which they mixed to their own secret recipes and Culpeper spent a long time finding and classifying herbs. Now he became aware of the plight of the poor who could never get any medical attention because they could not afford the doctors' fees. Nor could they access any medical information for themselves since it was all in Latin, a language that they could not understand. The Royal College of Physicians had a stranglehold on the whole profession which prevented change and stood in the way of progress. Above all it restricted medical services. Only those who could afford to pay for it could get treatment.

In 1640 Culpeper married a rich young lady. He decided to put the money they now shared to good use. He moved to a poor district of London and began treating patients – for free. He saw as many as 40 patients in a morning and **dispensed** to them medicines in line with his own ideas of herbal treatment. He began translating the classic Latin medical texts into English for the benefit of non-Latin readers. He had become a kind of rebel doctor.

While in London Culpeper listened to a preacher called John Goodwin (1594-1665). Perhaps he was even converted due to Goodwin's preaching. He wrote:

Many a times I find my patients disturbed by trouble of Conscience or Sorrow, and I have to act the Divine [Minister of the Gospel] before I can be the Physician. In fact our greatest skill lies in the **infusion** of Hopes, to **induce** confidence and peace of mind...  
... all the religion I know is in Jesus Christ and him crucified, and the indwelling of the spirit in me....



Not surprisingly the doctors of the Royal College of Physicians were very angry with Culpeper and called him an **imposter**. The Society of Apothecaries also denounced him and attempted to have him tried for witchcraft. All this made Culpeper angry and when the Civil War broke out he was naturally on the side of those who were against such Royal restrictions.

In the Civil War Culpeper was wounded but he had another shot left to fire at the medical establishment. In 1652, with King Charles I dead and the country a Commonwealth, there were no longer any restrictions on what could be published in terms of medical books. Culpeper was able to publish his book, *The English Physitian*. This book contained the “choicest secrets, which I have had many years locked up in my own breast”. The book was as cheap as Culpeper could make it. He wanted as many people as possible to benefit.

But now comes the sad part of the story. I am sorry to say that all through Culpeper's books runs the **astrology** which he had learned as a young man in his grandfather's library. He grouped plants and diseases with the supposed influences of various planets and thought that the collection or planting of herbs when the sun or moon was in particular relation to various signs of the **Zodiac** had a bearing on who or what they would cure. This made his work much less useful than it might otherwise have been both to his **contemporaries** and also to those who tried to learn from him afterwards. However, mistaken though he was, the very worst of Culpeper's remedies were no more harmful than the “official” prescriptions of the Royal College and most of his cures were at least harmless. It is interesting to consider that, had Culpeper taken the Bible's **injunctions** more seriously he would have been a better doctor!

## Something to do – a wildflower patch



Culpeper was an expert in identifying the plants that grew in the wild. He also grew his own plants. Even a small patch of wild flowers can make an interesting display in a corner of your garden and will attract useful insects and birds. If you want to plant a patch of wildflowers in your garden, now is one of the best times to do so. Flowers that naturally grow in cornfields such as wild red poppies do well if planted at this time of year so if you are planning to sow a wildflower mix now choose one that includes these types of plants. In the wild, flowers

release their seeds in late summer and autumn. If you sow your seeds in autumn you are **mimicking** this process. Autumn weather is often mild and damp which helps seeds germinate. Some will begin to germinate right away and you will see the leaves appear quite soon. Then they will just “sit tight” waiting for spring. They will probably flower earlier than spring sown seeds. Some other seeds will naturally just remain **dormant** in the soil through the winter and **germinate** in spring when conditions are right. Some of our British wild flowers actually need the winter cold to start growing. Poppies are like this and so are cowslips. Sowing your wildflowers at this time of year will often give very good results in the spring so if you have any space for a few wildflowers, plan your patch and plant them now.

In the lessons about Culpeper I have highlighted some words you might like to look up in your dictionary in **purple**.

## Something to read from science history

On **October 18<sup>th</sup>** 1962 it was announced that the Nobel Prize<sup>3</sup> for medicine and physiology had been won by Dr. James D. Watson of the U.S., Dr. Francis Crick and Dr. Maurice Wilkins of Britain. The prize was awarded for their work in finding out about the double-helix molecular structure of DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid).

What is DNA?<sup>4</sup> DNA is found in every cell of our bodies. You can see its interesting shape in the picture on the right. It looks rather like a twisted ladder. Each rung of the ladder functions like a “letter” of an alphabet. As you go up or down the ladder the letters spell out “words” and these words in turn spell out the instructions needed to build our bodies and control much of what happens inside us. DNA itself had first been identified and isolated almost a century before by Friedrich Miescher in 1869. It was the double helix structure that Dr. Watson, Dr. Crick and Dr. Wilkins identified.



Our bodies use proteins in order to function. DNA controls the building of these proteins in our bodies. An example is the protein hemoglobin. This protein is found in our blood. It carries oxygen from our lungs to the various parts of our bodies. Another protein is keratin. This is the substance from which our hair and fingernails are made. Proteins are made from building blocks called amino acids. The different amino acids that make up proteins are formed into chains which can be hundreds of amino acids long. Amino acids in different positions in the chain make up different

<sup>3</sup>The Swedish inventor of gunpowder, Alfred Nobel, (1833-1896) used some of his wealth as a legacy to establish annual prizes awarded in the fields of physics, chemistry, medicine, physiology, literature and peace.

<sup>4</sup> We looked at the DNA “code” in the lesson for 30<sup>th</sup> April. The explanation given here does not go into much detail. For more information see: <https://creation.com/dna-remarkable-language>.

proteins. This is where the DNA with its instructions comes in.

We have twenty six letters in our alphabet but DNA has just 4 letters; we call them A, C, T and G . Using these letters in combination different amino acids are specified. If the amino acid histidine is required, for example the DNA “word” or codon is CAT or if valine is needed the codon is GTG. The codon for the amino acid glycine is GGT and so on. In this way the various building blocks of the chains to form proteins are specified. For instance the code CATGGTGTG would mean “start with histidine, then glycine then valine.”

### Something to think about

Dr. Watson, Dr. Crick and Dr. Wilkins considered that this remarkable system somehow arose all on its own. If you think about that idea, however, it may occur to you that the information – the plan to which all this wonderful machinery is working – must have come from outside the system itself. Since information cannot arise on its own out of nowhere, DNA points to the Creator God like a signpost in our very bodies themselves.

### And just this once...



Americans seem to have a “day” to celebrate anything and everything which really seems to make the whole idea of a special day purposeless. However, I noticed something about today which I just could not resist and I think you might enjoy it too: Today in the USA is National Chocolate Cup Cake Day! If you want an easy treat and find American cup cakes a bit sugary why not make a mug cake instead (A mug is near enough to a cup, I think!) This recipe makes a chocolate mug cake big enough for two in about 3 minutes and requires no special ingredients!

4 tablespoons SR flour  
4 tablespoons caster sugar  
2 tablespoons cocoa powder  
1 small egg  
3 tablespoons cooking oil  
3 tablespoons milk  
vanilla/orange/mint etc. essence – you choose!  
2 tablespoons chocolate chips/raisins

Mix the dry ingredients in a very large mug.  
Add the egg and milk and stir carefully.

Microwave on high for about 2-3 minutes or until it has stopped rising.

You can top with gooey US-style butter icing too if you wish!