

Parenting God's Way

Text: Deuteronomy 6:4-9

Introduction:

1. Brief explanation of a baby dedication – i.e. it is primarily for the parents
2. Background:
 - Deuteronomy contains Moses' final sermons to the nation of Israel before his death recorded in Chapter 34. The nation stands poised and ready to enter the promised land and Moses will exhort them to faithfulness and obedience to the Lord.
 - In chapter 5 – Moses recounts the details of the giving of the law at Mount Sinai and reminds Israel of the 10 commandments.
 - Now in Chapter 6, Moses exhorts them to total commitment to God and His Words. As a part of this, he emphasizes the importance of the truth being transmitted to the next generation.
3. This passage contains some vital truths for godly parenting. There are **three key truths** I would like to draw your attention to in this sermon:

Consider firstly,

I. The Parents Relationship with God (Vs. 4)

A parent needs to know God personally

To know God personally we need to come to know 3 truths:

A. The Truth About God's Person (Vs. 4)

1. The Exclusivity of God – there is only One, True God
 - a. Isaiah 44:8 *"Fear ye not, neither be afraid: have not I told thee from that time, and have declared it? ye are even my witnesses. **Is there a God beside me? yea, there is no God; I know not any.**"*
 - b. Psalm 86:10 *"For thou art great, and doest wondrous things: **thou art God alone.**"*
 - c. Isaiah 43:11 *"I, even I, am the LORD; and **beside me there is no saviour.**"*
2. The Triunity of God – God is three in One
 - a. Two titles of God are used in this one verse. The first is 'LORD' which is the Hebrew word Jehovah. The second is 'God' which is the Hebrew word Elohim. The word "*Elohim*" in Hebrew is a plural word for God. This is why Genesis 1:26 says, *"And **God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness...**"*
 - b. 1 John 5:7 says, *"For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and **these three are one.**"*

- c. Illustrations: The imprint of God's character is seen in creation (Rom. 1:20)
 - i. Man, who is made in God's image, is a tripartite being comprised of spirit, soul and body (1 Thess. 5:23)
 - ii. The universe is made up of the 3 elements of space, mass and time. Each of these is also a trinity. For example, space is made up of length, breadth and height.

B. The Truth About Man's Perversity

- 1. All have sinned (Rom. 3:10; 23; 5:10; 1 John 3:4)
- 2. The wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23; Rev. 20:14-15)

C. The Truth About God's Provision

- 1. Christ died for our sins, was buried and rose again (1. Cor. 15:4-5; Rom. 5:7-8)
- 2. Salvation is available if you will repent of your sin and receive Christ as your personal Saviour (Rom. 10:9-10, 13)

Consider secondly,

II. The Parents Resolve for God (Vs. 5-6)

A parent needs to love God fervently

A. A Passion for God's Person (Vs. 5)

- 1. Loving God with ALL our heart – the seat of the affections & spirit
- 2. Loving God with ALL our soul – the seat of the mind, will and emotions.
- 3. Loving God with ALL our might – our strength and energy (body)
- 4. Note: Our love for God in the inner man (heart & soul) finds expression in service (might).
- 5. F.B. Meyer: "There are four channels of love. The heart stands for our emotions; the soul for our will and general individuality; the mind for our intellect; and strength for the energies and activities of our service."
- 6. Christ singled out this law in the New Testament as the supreme commandment in the entire law. Matthew 22:37-39 "*Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the **first and great** commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.*" Love is the basis and motivation for obedience (John 14:15).
- 7. Challenge: God requires the total devotion of the total man. With Paul our heart cry should be, "*For to me to live is Christ...*" (Phil. 1:21). We need to take to heart the exhortation of Colossians 3:2 to "*Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.*"

8. God's blessing is poured out on children whose parents who have a passion for God. Isaiah 44:3-4 *"For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: **I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring:** And they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses. One shall say, I am the LORD's; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the LORD, and surname himself by the name of Israel."*

B. A Passion for God's Precepts (Vs. 6)

1. **"If you love God for who He is, you will love Him for what He says."**
2. "these words...shall be in thine heart" = the heart, not just the head. Implies love for the Word of God and commitment to it. When the Word of God is saturating the heart, it exerts its sweet influence upon the whole life. It affects our attitudes, our decision making and our priorities.
3. Psalm 51:6 *"Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts..."*
4. This is the vital prerequisite/qualification for training our children in the Word of God. Even in secular education, a difference can be discerned between a teacher who is passionately committed to his/her subject and a teacher who merely communicates some head knowledge mechanically.
5. Challenge: This means as parents we need to be serious about our approach to the Word of God.
 - a. Serious approach to personal devotions
 - b. Serious approach to personal study habits (reading, memorization, sermons)
 - c. Serious approach to the preaching and teaching ministry of the local church. Be there and then actually be there when you are there!
6. Psalm 119:48 *"My hands also will I lift up unto thy commandments, which **I have loved;** and I will meditate in thy statutes."*
7. Psalm 119:97 *"O how **love** I thy law! It is my meditation **all the day.**"*
8. Psalm 119:148 *"Mine eyes prevent the night watches, **that I might meditate in thy word.**"*

Consider thirdly,

III. The Parents Responsibility from God (Vs. 7-9)

A parent needs to impart God's Word diligently

A. Teach the Word Diligently (Vs. 7a)

1. The Textbook for teaching – **"teach them"**
 - a. 'them' refers back to the 'words' of Vs. 6.

- b. Our number one priority as parents is that our children be educated in the Word of God. This is to take priority over ALL other education. Our church covenant reads, *“We further covenant to maintain family and secret devotion; to religiously educate our children...”*
 - c. “He who places secular knowledge, and the things of the world, before this study and sacred knowledge, prefers rubbish to treasure: for the mystery of the Gospel is treasure; all else is dung and dross.” (John Davenant)
 - d. The German Reformer Martin Luther said, “I am much afraid that the universities will prove to be the great gates of hell, unless they diligently labour in explaining the Holy Scriptures and engraving them in the hearts of youth. I advise no one to place his child where the Scriptures do not reign paramount. Every institution in which men are not unceasingly occupied with the Word of God must become corrupt.”
 - e. It is a Biblical requirement that our children get a Bible-based, Christ-centred education!
2. The Technique for teaching – ‘*diligently*’
- a. “teach them diligently” = comes from the Hebrew word meaning “to sharpen or to whet” and is often translated that way in the O.T. For example:
 - i. Deut. 32:41 *“If I **whet** my glittering sword...”*
 - ii. Isaiah 5:28 *“Whose **arrows** are sharp...”*
 - iii. Psalm 45:5 *“Thine **arrows** are sharp...”*
 - b. A whetstone is used for the sharpening of tools and is used figuratively for sharpening the wits or the mind. (J. Grant) We even use this sort of language to describe someone with “a sharp mind.”
 - c. Children are likened to arrows in Psalm 127:4 – *“As **arrows** are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth. Happy is the man that hath his **quiver** full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate.”*
 - d. Picture implies the need for repetition and regularity in our teaching of the Word of God.
 - e. Challenge: Are the minds of our children being sharpened by the Word of God or blunted by the entertainments and philosophies of this world?
 - f. CNN Report from Nov. 4th 2015: On any given day, teens in the USA spend about 9 hours using media for their enjoyment. To put that in context, that means more time than teens typically spend sleeping, and more time than they spend with their parents and teachers. And the nine hours does not include time spent using media at school or for homework. James Steyer, CEO and founder of *Common Sense Media* in an interview said, “I think the sheer volume of media technology that kids are exposed to on a daily basis is

mind-boggling. It just shows you that these kids live in this massive 24/7 digital media technology world, and **it's shaping every aspect of their life.** I just think that it should be a complete wake-up call to every parent, educator, policymaker, business person and tech industry person that the reshaping of our media tech landscape is first and foremost affecting young people's lives and reshaping childhood and adolescence."

B. Discuss the Word Frequently (Vs. 7b)

1. We are not only to **'teach'** the Word to our children but we are to **'talk'** about the Word with your children. God's Word is to dominate family conversation. It is to be the theme that captivates our hearts and minds.
2. All of family life is to be centred around the things of God. Specific examples are given as follows:
 - a. "when thou sittest in thine house" = when we are inside the home (e.g. leisure, rest & meal times). Oh for homes immersed in and saturated by the Word of God! Meal times often present a good opportunity for devotions when all the family is seated in one place.
 - b. "when thou walkest by the way" = when we are outside the home (travel). We take our faith with us when we leave home!
 - c. "when thou liest down, and when thou risest up" = when we get up in the morning and when we go to bed at night. Begin the day with the Lord and end the day with the Lord!
3. Challenge: What subject dominates the headlines of your home?

C. Display the Word Purposefully (Vs. 8-9)

1. The picture – the Word of God is to be continually in focus. Upon the hand to guide our actions, before our eyes that we may see life in light of the Word.
2. The practice – be creative in keeping the Word of God before your eyes in the home (e.g. Scripture posters etc...)
3. C.H. Mackintosh: "Here we have, indeed, a golden rule which takes in everything from the cradle to matured manhood. Yes, we repeat, "from the cradle;" for we are most fully persuaded that all true Christian training begins at the very beginning. Some of us have little idea of how soon and how sharply children begin to observe; and **how much they take in as they gaze at us through their dear expressive eyes.** And then how marvellously susceptible they are of the moral atmosphere which surrounds them! Yes; and it is this very moral atmosphere that constituted the grand secret of training our families. Our children should be permitted to breathe, from day to day, the atmosphere of love and peace, purity, holiness and true practical righteousness. This has an amazing effect in forming the character." Pg. 172

Conclusion:

1. Do you have a relationship with God? Are you saved?
2. What steps are we taking to ensure our children are educated in the Word of God?