

do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were
2 all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the
all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that
Rock was Christ. 5 But with most of them God was not well
pleased, for their bodies were scattered in the wilderness. 6 Now these things became our examples, to the
intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted. 7 And do not become idolaters as were
some of them. As it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play." 8 Nor let us
commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell; 9 nor let us
tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed by serpents; 10 nor complain, as some of
them also complained, and were destroyed by the destroyer. 11 Now all these things happened to them as
examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have
come. 12 Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. 13 No temptation has overtaken
you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond
what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it."

"Nurture and Admonition"

- Last week we talked about experiencing the reality of Christmas every day!

I pointed out that we cannot have the experience of Christmas without the reality of Christmas.

The reality that Jesus came in the flesh to save His people from their sins.

I pointed you to my favorite and very personal Psalm, Psalm 51, as a means of learning to live this reality day by day. This morning I want to continue this encouragement & move from a Psalm to a book from the Old Testament:

- The Book of Deuteronomy.

Now I know what some of you are thinking... It took almost a hundred sermons for me to get through the Gospel of Luke and it will be over a hundred more when I finish Acts later this year!

- How long is it going to take to go through Deuteronomy?

If I were to preach through this book exegetically, it would likely take as long as I have spent on Luke & Acts together! That might be a task that I undertake at some future time, but for now I want to use this book to encourage and challenge us over the next three weeks. Obviously I will be leaving much for your further study, but I hope that what I share is helpful and does in fact lead to much further study and lots of helpful discussions...

- So why Deuteronomy?

For starters, this second giving of the Law was the book most quoted by Jesus in His earthly ministry!

But I also have some practical reasons for drawing your attention to this important book... As has been our practice, we take the early weeks of January to finish the Christmas accounts and remember the importance of the season of Epiphany: The manifestation of Jesus!

We also take the Sunday that falls closest to January 22nd to confess the sins of our nation, lamenting the great sin of abortion and calling down God's judgment upon this evil.

As I reflected on what to cover in these weeks this year, I remembered how we addressed the issue of marriage when we faced a very heated initiative battle here in California a few years ago.

that we could not simply attack something that is not

as Disciples of Jesus must first clearly demonstrate to the
riage.

It is much the same when we consider the sin of abortion: We must not only oppose this sin against those made in the image of God, but we must also demonstrate what it really means to love and appreciate the covenant children that God chooses to bless us with.

Pastor Steve Wilkins aptly began his series of messages on children, that many of you have listened to, by stating the obvious regarding America:

- We hate children!

This stems not only from the fact that we currently kill a third of them through abortion, but extends to our general attitude as well. We are much more likely to see them as a burden than as a blessing!

[mention how the church is guilty in both areas as well]

So before we address the sin of abortion in two weeks, it would be good to address what our proper attitude toward children should be! The Lord also put on my heart the fact that we have a huge responsibility in this area here at Church of the King.

- This is a reality that is often a great burden on my heart because I know the importance of this responsibility and often feel very inadequate for the task.

We are certainly NOT a mega-church and not even a large church by today's standards. We may not even qualify as medium sized congregation!

- However, despite our small size, God has blessed us abundantly with children and young people.

We do our best to reject the worldly concept of adolescence and thus I would encourage us to consider those who have reached the age of thirteen as young adults rather than as teenagers.

- By this age they should begin to lay aside many of their childish things and seriously begin to prepare for the calling that God has for them in their lives.
- Enabling them to do so requires the proper nurture and admonition in their younger years.

I did a rough count from our members and regular attenders and we have thirty-three children twelve years of age or younger! We have another twenty among us who have reached the age of maturity and have not yet married or been given the gift of celibacy. *[explain these groups]*

- I hope you can see why this is a bit overwhelming & I would remind you that it should be for all of us!

Senator Clinton was wrong when she said 'it takes a village to raise a child,'

- But it is true that it takes a Church to properly raise a child!

Moving from infancy to mature adulthood is not something we can do by ourselves; nor is it something that we can properly do only as families.

Looking at it from the other side, the proper nurturing of these covenant children is the responsibility of ALL of us, which is why we include the vow of the other members to assist the parents in their Biblical nurture and admonition when a child is baptized. Reflecting on this is what brought me to Deuteronomy...

Deuteronomy is the account of the encouragement God gave His people through Moses as they prepared to enter the promised land...

- And as the Apostle Paul pointed out in our text, these serve as examples given for our benefit.

sin of abortion in our nation, as we should and must, we
to the covenant children that God has placed in our midst.

of our favorites if we are to do the Lord's work in the Lord's way!

we can see that it lays out God's vision for His people, it
gives us God's instructions for His people and it gives us God's warnings for His people.

- This week I want to review God's vision, next week we will consider His instructions and finally on January 22nd we will take a sober look at His warnings.

Vision, instructions and warnings are certainly not restricted to a particular part of this book, but there is a general flow in Deuteronomy... Chapters one through eleven remind God's people that He has been their deliverer and what great plans that He has for them in the Promised Land.

Chapters twelve through twenty-six give a full explanation of this second giving of the Law, which is where this book derives its name. Finally, in chapters twenty-seven through the end of the book we have God's warnings for His people.

- So with our little ones in mind, what are some of the lessons we should gather from these opening chapters of Deuteronomy?

Just as King David began Psalm 51 with an honest confession after the confrontation of Nathan the Prophet, so Moses confronts the people who are gathered just outside the promised land with a reminder of their great sins. He reminds them that it was only an eight-day journey from Mount Horeb near where the Law was first given to Kadesh-barnea where they should have entered the Promised Land.

- As we all know, their stubbornness and rebellion led to a forty year journey instead!

A journey that brought death for all those over the age of twenty... Those who did not think God was looking out for them or their children.

- These same children are now being prepared to enter the land.

Moses then reminds them of the more recent history where they saw God remember his covenant with the Children of Esau by having His people pass by them peaceably. They then saw the beginning of the victory God was going to give them over the people of Canaan with the utter defeat of Sihon, King of Heshbon and Og King of Bashan.

- The lesson for us to remember is the importance of teaching our children the history of God's people!

Moses then reminds them that he is forbidden from entering the promised land because of his personal disobedience. *[discuss greater responsibility]*

At the beginning of chapter four Moses tells them that it will be very important for them to obey the statues and rules that he is teaching them.

- There is another very critical lesson here if we are to properly give our covenant children the nurture and admonition that they need...
- Moses is NOT saying that they must keep all of these statues and rules to be saved!

God is their ONLY Savior: It is He who delivered them from Egypt & it is HE who will go before them to defeat all the enemies in the land & to graciously GIVE them the Promised Land.

God is NOT setting up a test for the people of Israel to see if they can earn their salvation and then if they fail have to come up with plan B by sending a Messiah to save them!

- God knows that we cannot obey and serve Him without His abiding love and the failure of God's people reminds us of this reality.

...nised, they are cast out of the land years later in the
four we see the hope of the Gospel that we now have after the

...ur God, and you will find Him if you seek Him with all your
heart and with all your soul. 30 When you are in distress, and all these things come upon you in the latter
days, when you turn to Jehovah your God and obey His voice 31 (for Jehovah your God is a merciful
God), He will not forsake you nor destroy you, nor forget the covenant of your fathers which He swore to them.”

- This is the vision that Deuteronomy gives to God’s people.

It carries all the way through the instructions and warning into chapter twenty-nine where we read @
verse 10: “All of you stand today before Jehovah your God: your leaders and your tribes and your
elders and your officers, all the men of Israel, 11 your little ones and your wives--also the stranger who is
in your camp, from the one who cuts your wood to the one who draws your water-- 12 that you may enter
into covenant with Jehovah your God, and into His oath, which Jehovah your God makes with you
today, 13 that He may establish you today as a people for Himself, and that He may be God to you, just
as He has spoken to you, and just as He has sworn to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. 14 "I
make this covenant and this oath, not with you alone,15 but with him who stands here with us today
before Jehovah our God, as well as with him who is not here with us today”

- Back in chapter four Moses tells them that all the nations of the earth will marvel at the wisdom of
the instructions that we will consider next week.

But Moses challenges the people in verse nine saying, “Only take heed to yourself, and diligently keep
yourself, lest you forget the things your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days
of your life. And teach them to your children and your grandchildren...”

Moses then reminds the people that they must flee from all idolatry and worship only God and in
chapter five we have the second giving of the Law of God which we read often here at Church of the
King. And finally we come to the familiar words in chapter six that we often refer to when discussing how
to properly disciple our children...

Deuteronomy 6:4 “4 "Hear, O Israel: Jehovah our God, Jehovah is one! 5 You shall love Jehovah 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. 8 You shall bind them as a sign on
your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. 9 You shall write them on the doorposts of
your house and on your gates.”

As we often do with Biblical teaching, we see here a road leading to salvation and life as we properly
instruct our children, but it is also a road with dangerous ditches on either side:

On the one is the ditch of neglect where we do not bother to instruct or discipline our children, allowing
them to just “be themselves” as the world would have us do.

On the other side is the ditch of legalism where we fail to heed the warning that we are not to boil a goat
in its mother’s milk: We are not to take that which God intends for health & life, the instructions that we
will study next week, and turn them into an instrument of death.

There is NO way that any of our covenant children can earn their salvation and we must guard against
giving them any impression they can lest we lead them to the path of death.

- What they need is our Biblical instruction and our faithful lives!

nts in our lives and teaching our children to do the same

forgetfulness and that is just what Moses then warns the people about: 10 "So it shall be, when Jehovah your God brings you into the land of which He swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give you large and beautiful cities which you did not build, 11 houses full of all good things, which you did not fill, hewn-out wells which you did not dig, vineyards and olive trees which you did not plant--when you have eaten and are full-- 12 then beware, lest you forget Jehovah who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage."

- In chapter seven Moses reminds them that they are God's chosen people as we strive to do in worship each week!

He describes the blessedness of covenant faithfulness and how God works patiently with His people... Giving the Promised Land to them slowly so it will not be overrun with wild beasts.

In chapter 8, Moses again reminds them of God's faithfulness saying in verse 11 'take care lest you forget Jehovah your God by not keeping His commandments' and again in verse 17: "Beware lest you say in your heart, 'My power and the might of my hand have gotten me this wealth.'"

- Then in chapter nine Moses reminds the people again that they were not chosen because they were something special!

In verse 4 we read, 'do not say in your heart, after Jehovah has thrust them out before you, 'It is because of my righteousness that Jehovah has brought me in to possess this land.'

Moses goes on to recount their rebellion in the very presence of God as he received the Ten Commandments and how Moses interceded for the people when God said He would destroy them and start over with just Moses!

- The very Law they are now being called to obey was the sign of God's mercy as He heard the prayers of Moses and gave them a second set of stone tablets.

And finally, as Moses prepares to review all of the ordinances and statutes they are to follow he gives them a challenge that should sound very familiar to New Testament readers...

Deuteronomy 10:11 "Then Jehovah said to me, 'Arise, begin your journey before the people, that they may go in and possess the land which I swore to their fathers to give them.'

12 "And now, Israel, what does Jehovah your God require of you, but to fear Jehovah your God, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, to serve Jehovah your God with all your heart and with all your soul, 13 and to keep the commandments of Jehovah and His statutes which I command you today for your good? 14 Indeed heaven and the highest heavens belong to Jehovah your God, also the earth with all that is in it. 15 Jehovah delighted only in your fathers, to love them; and He chose their descendants after them, you above all peoples, as it is this day. 16 Therefore circumcise the foreskin of your heart, and be stiff-necked no longer. 17 For Jehovah your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality nor takes a bribe. 18 He administers justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the stranger, giving him food and clothing. 19 Therefore love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt. 20 You shall fear Jehovah your God; you shall serve Him, and to Him you shall hold fast, and take oaths in His name. 21 He is your praise, and He is your God, who has done for you these great and awesome things which your eyes have seen. 22 Your fathers went down to Egypt with seventy persons, and now Jehovah your God has made you as the stars of heaven in multitude."

... in second chapter of his Epistle to the Romans “28 For he is
circumcision that which is outward in the flesh; 29 but he is a Jew
of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is

In our text this morning, the Apostle Paul said not once but TWICE that all these things happened to
them as examples for us being, “written for our admonition,”

Telling us in the second reference that we are those, “upon whom the ends of the ages have come.”

- We are those who God had in mind.

The Lord gave this promise to the people as they were about to enter the promised land in chapter 26,
“18 [Today] Jehovah has proclaimed you to be His special people, just as He promised you, that you
should keep all His commandments, 19 and that He will set you high above all nations which He has
made, in praise, in name, and in honor, and that you may be a holy people to Jehovah your God, just as
He has spoken.”

Jesus gives the same promise to His disciples as they were prepared to enter the New Creation where the
place of God’s dwelling has become His Son’s Bride the Church and the land has become the nations of
the earth... At the end of His sermon on the mount Jesus said,

“24 "Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who
built his house on the rock: 25 and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on
that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. 26 But everyone who hears these sayings of
Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: 27 & the rain
descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its
fall.”

As we look around at the many covenant children and young people that God has blessed our little
congregation with, may we remember the responsibility that we have to give them the nurture and
admonition they need to be those who build on the solid foundation:

- The Rock, who is their Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Communion Meditation: Matthew 5:

ō17 "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to
fulfill. 18 For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no
means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. 19 Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these
commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does
and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20 For I say to you, that unless your
righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the
kingdom of heaven.”