

RTM

reaching/teaching/ministering curriculum



June 14, 2009 3 Steps to Influencing Kids Deuteronomy 6:4-25

MINISTERING HELPS

Group Prayer

VBS begins tomorrow with 1000+ kids on our campus. Pray for VBS in the following ways...

- 1) Kids will come and engage with God and the Scriptures.
- 2) Workers will be prayed up, prepared and passionate about connecting with the kids.
- 3) That the week will be one that is safe and extremely spiritual.
- 4) That the Family Night Carnival will be well attended and families will be encouraged to come back to FBC Allen to discover the blessings of the Lord and church membership.

Go After Absentees

Don't let summer vacations stop someone from being connected. Use a class email or phone tree to stay connected. Make sure people know they are missed if they have been gone!

REACHING HELPS

Harvest Saturday is this Saturday, June 20. On that day, we will meet in the Fellowship Hall to pray over the 100+ unchurched families that we will discover through VBS and then make an effort to contact them and invite them to church the next day.

We need every adult class to have at least ONE person who is willing to be here representing their class.

Who will be the
one to represent
your class at
**HARVEST
SATURDAY!**

TEACHING HELPS

We continue our sermon series called LIVING AT THE SPEED OF LIFE.

Today over 500 kids ages 17 and younger are on our campus. They represent billions of kids that will be providing world wide leadership decisions in the years to come.

How can we insure that the next generation is connected to the things of God and has every opportunity to make these decisions in ways that will honor God?

Today's lesson is a three step approach for impacting kids from the book of Deuteronomy.

Steps for Influencing Kids!

Deuteronomy 6:4-25

Growing up, one of my parents favorite sayings was; “Your walk talks, and your talk talks, but your walk talks louder than your talk talks.” If I heard it once, I heard it a thousands times. The principle is simple, words matter, but more important than words are the actions behind the words. Without knowing it, this same principle became the level by which I evaluated my parents. I looked at their actions first, words second. “Do as I say not as I do,” is not biblical parenting.

The setting for today’s lesson is when the Israelites were gathered on the east side of the Jordan River, preparing to enter the Promised Land. One of Moses’ lasts acts as leader was to remind them of the covenant relationship they had with God. After reminding them of the 10 Commandments in Deuteronomy 5, Moses instructs parents in Deuteronomy 6 to teach children in three ways; unify God’s instruction, catch God’s instruction and explain God’s instruction.

STEP ONE... UNIFY GOD’S INSTRUCTION: Deuteronomy 6:4

4 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.

This verse is called the Shema, from the Hebrew word translated Hear. The statement in this verse is the basic confession of faith in Judaism. It is one of four passages which they write on their phylacteries¹. The verse means that the Lord is totally unique. He alone is God. The Israelites could therefore have a sense of security that was totally impossible for their polytheistic neighbors. The gods of the ancient Near East rarely were thought of as acting in harmony. Each god was unpredictable and morally capricious. So a pagan worshiper could never be sure that his loyalty to one god would serve to protect him from the capricious wrath of another.

¹ Phylacteries consist of two leathern boxes—one worn on the arm and known as "shel yad" or "shelzeroa", and the other worn on the head and known as "shel rosh." They were made of the skins of clean animals. Each box contained four Scriptural passages Ex. 13:1-10, 11-16; Deut. 4:4-9, 9:13-21. The hand-phylactery had only one compartment, which contains the four Biblical selections written upon a single strip of parchment in four parallel columns and in the order given in the Bible. The head-phylactery had four compartments, formed from one piece of leather, in each of which one selection written on a separate piece of parchment is deposited perpendicularly.

Teaching Plan

Introduction...

Get your group talking by asking the following questions...

- ▶ What were the greatest lessons you learned from your parents?
- ▶ What is something your parents or an adult told you when you were a kid that you had to learn the hard way?

It is imperative that we do all we can as adults to impact the next generation of leaders. Our kids and their friends will be making choices that will affect churches, communities, our nation and our world in the years to come. They will either do it with and in the Lord’s strength, or they will have to figure it out on their own.

If your group has kids, let today’s lesson challenge them in their spiritual influence, not only on their own kids but their kid’s friends as well. If your group is beyond or before the age of having kids, they are not exempt. There are many ways they engage with kids every day. Challenge them in making the effort to influence kids when the opportunity arises.

Step ONE... UNIFY (Deut. 6:4)

1. Have someone read the whole passage.
2. Make sure your group understands the context of the passage (use the commentary notes for help)...
 - ▶ Where they were and who was giving this speech to the Israelites.
 - ▶ What Moses had just gone over in Chapter 5.
3. Verse 4 is the SHEMA. It was and is an important confession of faith for Jewish people. Talk about why this was an important statement, comparing Israel’s MONOTHEISM (one God belief) with everyone else’s POLYTHEISM (multiple gods belief).
4. Do our kids have to deal with polytheism today? How will it help them knowing there is only ONE God they need to connect with for life?

Monotheism — belief in only one God — was a distinctive feature of Hebrew religion. Many ancient religions believed in many gods. But the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is the God of the whole earth, the only true God. This was an important insight for the nation of Israel because they were about to enter a land filled with people who believed in many gods. Both then and today, there are people who prefer to place their trust in many different "gods." But the day is coming when God will be recognized as the only One. He will be the king over the whole earth ([Zechariah 14:9](#)).

6:4-9 This passage provides the central theme of Deuteronomy. It sets a pattern that helps us relate the Word of God to our daily lives. We are to love God, think constantly about His commandments, teach His commandments to our children and live each day by the guidelines in His Word. God emphasized the importance of parents' teaching the Bible to their children. The church and Christian schools cannot be used to escape from this responsibility. The Bible provides so many opportunities for object lessons and practical teaching that it would be a shame to study it only one day a week. Eternal truths are most effectively learned in the loving environment of a God-fearing home.

—Life Application Bible Notes

The monotheistic doctrine of the Israelites lifted them out of this insecurity since they had to deal with only one God, who dealt with them by a revealed consistent righteous standard. This confession of monotheism does not preclude the biblical doctrine of the Trinity. "God" is plural (ʿēlohîm), possibly implying the Trinity, and one (ʿehād) may suggest a unity of the Persons in the Godhead. Genesis 2:24 is an example where the same word for "one" is used of Adam and Eve. Although this verse is not the foundation for a Trinitarian theology it can be and should be used in a supporting role. Regardless, constancy and consistency is the message.

STEP TWO... CATCH GOD'S INSTRUCTION: Deuteronomy 6:5-9

5 Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. 6 These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. 7 Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. 8 Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. 9 Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

Loving God is caught easier than it's taught. To love the Lord means to choose Him for an intimate relationship and to obey His commands. This command, to love Him, is given often throughout the book of Deuteronomy² and rest of Scripture. Christ calls this commandment the greatest of all the commandments in Matt. 22:37. This command, according to Christ, is more important than any sacrifice in Mark 12:33. Loving God was to be wholehearted and was to be a part of every aspect of an Israelite's being and life (soul and strength). When children see a parent's

Step Two... CATCH God's Instruction (Deut. 6:5-9)

1. What does the phrase "lessons are better caught than taught" mean? Do you agree with this statement? Can you live it without saying it? What is the danger? Can you say it without living it? What is the danger? Lead folks to understand that you can only really catch it if you are both speaking and living out the truths of Scripture.

2. How does someone show that they love the Lord? Is it feelings or more than that? How does the following verse help us understand the answer?

¹⁵ "If you love me, obey my commandments."
John 14:15 (NLT)

How would our obedience to God's commands help someone else catch God's instructions?

3. What does it mean for God's commandments to be upon our hearts? What is the difference between having it in our minds vs. in our hearts?

4. Where are all the places Deut. 6:5-9, says we should place the Scriptures? Where are places that we set out Scripture passages today? It implies that we should not just set them out for display but talk about them with our kids. When do you (could you) take time to talk about the Scriptures with kids?

² [v. 5](#); [7:9](#); [10:12](#); [11:1](#), [13](#), [22](#); [13:3](#); [19:9](#); [30:6](#), [16](#), [20](#).

love for God, it is much easier for them to follow in those steps.

God's people were responsible to meditate on these commandments, so that they would keep them in their hearts. This enabled them to understand the Law and to apply it correctly. Having lived God's law, parents were in a position to impress them on their children's hearts. The word, impress, means to repeat, iterate or do a thing again and again. It is likened to sharpening any instrument, which is done by friction or grinding. It is also likened to pressing grapes for juice, which is done through continued pressing and pressure. **The Hebrew language leaves no wiggle room; PARENTS ARE TO FORCE THESE TRUTHS ON THEIR CHILDREN.** In a post-modern culture, we are taught to feel uncomfortable with the idea of forcing anything on children. This is unbiblical. Moses made it very clear that it is a parent's responsibility to teach their children spirituality.

Moses explained further that the moral and biblical education of children is best accomplished, not in a formal teaching period, but when parents make God and His Word the natural topic of a conversation. It is looking for God throughout their personal day and then sharing Him with their children. It is using their children's events and applying God's Word to that situation. This could occur anywhere and anytime during the day. This is a very difficult task that requires patience, prudence, judgment and much piety. It requires timing, time, interaction and thought. Love is caught then taught.

The commands to tie them and write them were taken literally by some later Jewish readers. It was an ancient and general custom observed in almost every part of the world to tie knots in ones clothing as a reminder of something important, or a cord on his hand or finger. God, who knows how slow of heart we are to understand, graciously orders us to make use of every help, and through the means of sensible things, to rise to spiritual things. Although Jews took this to the extreme with their phylactery, we still practice this through pictures, plaques, knick-knacks, knitting's and more. The concept is simple, the more God's word is seen, thought through and conversed about, the more likely it is to be followed.

The Jews used these things as superstitious people use amulets and charms. They perceived that if they had these passages of Scripture written upon slips of pure parchment, wrapped round their foreheads, tied to their arm, or nailed to their door-posts; that they would be delivered from every evil. How much better are many Christians, who keep a Bible in their house merely so it may keep the devil out? The ingenious heart of man will find every wrong way to miss the right. The point is simple, it is not the words that protect and bless but the God behind the words. Without a true relationship with the God of the Bible, the bible becomes another book of words.

STEP THREE... EXPLAIN GOD'S INSTRUCTION: Deuteronomy 6:20-25

20 In the future, when your son asks you, "What is the meaning of the stipulations, decrees and laws the LORD our God has commanded you?" 21 tell him: "We were slaves of Pharaoh in Egypt, but the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand. 22 Before our eyes the LORD sent miraculous signs and wonders--great and terrible--upon Egypt and Pharaoh and his whole household. 23 But he brought us out from there to bring us in and give us the land that he promised on oath to our forefathers. 24 The LORD commanded us to obey all these decrees and to fear the LORD our God, so that we might always prosper and be kept alive, as is the case today. 25 And if we are careful to obey all this law before the LORD our God, as he has commanded us, that will be our righteousness." Deuteronomy 6:4-25 (NIV)

Face it, "why", can be a frightening question asked by anyone. But it is even more so, when asked by your child. As Moses continued to instruct the Israelites, he ends the passage with this overall message, "explain God's teachings to your children." It is a fairly simple process that Moses gives. Force the teaching upon your children so they will know it, but when they ask explain why they need to follow it.

Step THREE... Explain God's Instructions (Deut. 2:20-25)

1. It is interesting that there is a difference made between reading about the scriptures (caught) and explaining them (explain). One is more about knowing what God has said. The other is about telling your kids of your experiences with the Lord.

- ▶ How hard is it to talk to your kids about spiritual things?
- ▶ What are categories that are important for us to talk to our kids about, letting them know our experiences with the Lord?
- ▶ Should we only tell them our successes? How can sharing our failures of NOT following the Lord be helpful?
- ▶ Why don't adults talk to kids about spiritual things?

Once again Moses reminded his audience of the crucial need to pass on values to their children. The situation presented here concretely illustrates the command in [verses 6-9](#). Moses envisioned a home where the Word of God is discussed openly as a part of everyday life. When a young son asked about the meaning of the Israelite Law his father was to use the following pattern in explaining it to him.

- First, the Israelites were in bondage in Egypt ([v. 21a](#)). (a picture of former life without God)
- Second, God miraculously delivered the Israelites ([v. 21b](#); cf. [4:20](#)) and judged the Egyptians ([6:22](#)). (God's personal deliverance – salvation)
- Third, this marvelous work was in accord with His ancient promise to the patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac and Jacob) to build a nation of their descendants in the land of Canaan ([v. 23](#); cf. [Gen. 15:18-21](#); [17:7-8](#); [26:3-5](#); [28:13-15](#)). (Growth, next-steps, and maturity, it is a process)
- Fourth, God gave His Word in the form of decrees so that the Israelites might always prosper (cf. [Deut. 5:33](#)) by obeying it and fearing God (cf. [4:10](#); [6:13](#)). (The blessings of obedience)

Near the beginning of this chapter, Moses stressed the need of parents to love Him with their total being. Now as the chapter closes Moses indicated that one aspect of loving (and thus obeying) God is to pass that same love for Him on to their children.

The importance of this teaching was for their children's prosperity, life and righteousness. God's covenant with Israel was a promise that if Israel followed and served Him, he would bless and prosper them relentlessly. The stories of God's faithfulness would serve as a reminder to their children. It would lead their life (spiritual and physical) in God.

Righteousness is more than the observance of the law God had given. It was a standing, or relationship they had with God when they were obedient. They would be treated by God as righteous. This righteousness before Jehovah is not really the gospel "righteousness of faith;" but there is no opposition between the two. The righteousness mentioned here is not founded upon the outward (pharisaic) righteousness of works, but upon an earnest striving after the fulfillment of the law; to love God with all the heart. This love is altogether impossible without living faith.

SO THEN ... What does Deuteronomy 6, written some 4000 years ago, have to do with Collin County parenting? Several observances bridge that gap.

1. Parents are to be unified in the Word, having the same goals, objectives and attitude towards parenting. These come through God's Word.

2. Parents are to make their children catch the Word. No one will see a hypocrite faster than a child. Parents can tell their children a thousand times, but until they live it out daily, children have no example or motivation. (James 1:23-25) Along with exemplifying how to live they are to instruct, teach and learn them in the ways of life THROUGH THE WORD OF GOD. (Pr. 22:6; Eph. 6:4; Is. 38:19)

3. Parents are to explain the Word. This does not mean you have to be a theologian, apologist, or “super Christian.” It does mean; parents need to determine why certain actions, attitudes, words and activities are acceptable and others are not. In this, I mean, in their own life not their children’s. If parents are clued into their own actions, attitudes, words and activities; it is only sensible that their children will follow them too. That is when there is opportunity to explain WHY, both in a positive and negative setting.

UNIFY CATCH EXPLAIN

Points for Application...

1. There are many “spiritual” ways to interpret the world. It is important that we not only help our kids to understand that Jesus Christ is the only way to God, but also to help them understand the false ideas they will encounter and why they are not true. Someone will talk to your kids about these things. You can either be proactive or reactive in responding.
2. If you were going to take your kids to catch fish you would go to a river, lake or another body of water. Where can or should we be taking our kids so they will catch the Word of God? How can we help them catch the Word at home? How can we do family Scripture readings at home? How do they change as kids get older?
3. Explaining the truths of Scripture is basically your testimony of how you have proven them to be true. We prove them both by accepting them and receiving blessings, or rejecting them and receiving the consequences. What are ways we can do a better job or sharing our own personal “God stories” with our kids?