

November 2, 2025

LOVE: DEUTERONOMY 6:1-9,20-25

Teacher's Notes: We are going to spend the bulk of our time on point 2.

Introductory Activity (Adapted from ETB LG, 101)

“Read: Invite a volunteer to read the opening paragraph on page 82 of the PSG. [See Notes Box.]

Ask: What’s an effective way to help a child learn? Why is this method successful? (PSG, p. 82)

Summarize: God had brought His people to the edge of the land that He had promised their ancestors centuries earlier. Moses repeated the Ten Commandments for the people (5:1-21; see Ex. 20:1-17). . . . Moses reminded the Israelites how they had feared approaching the mountain when God gave His words (Deut. 5:22-33). Moses interceded for the people, and the Lord expressed His desire that they would always be faithful to Him.

Transition: As we study today’s passage, notice how Moses’s words challenged the Israelites not just to know and obey the commands of God, but also to teach them to their children. Consider what content from God’s Word you should know and obey as you teach the next generation how to live to honor God.”

1. FEAR OF THE LORD (DEUT. 6:1-3)

Read (or have someone read) Deuteronomy 6:1-3.

Object Lesson: Monsters

“Prior to the session, print pictures of several classic monsters from the internet. You also can include some real-life scary things, such as snakes, spiders, and so forth.... [S]how adults the pictures and talk about why each might create fear.” (ETB LG, 103)—Alternatively, you could ask the group to name things they are fearful of.

Explain: In our lesson today, Moses is going to begin by reminding the people to fear the Lord.

Discuss: What is the difference between fearing things like we discussed and fearing the Lord?

Explain: There is a difference between being scared while watching a movie or being scared of the spider or snake in your house and having a fear of the Lord. There is even a difference between the fear a sinful person *should* feel toward the Lord and the fear a believer should experience. “As sinners, this fear involves terror. ‘It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God’ (Heb. 10:31). Indeed, as sinful people, we all have every reason to fear God’s judgment. “For the people of God,

Notes:

This Lesson was created using:

- *Explore the Bible Leader Guide* (ETB LG)
- *Explore the Bible Personal Study Guide* (ETB PSG)
- *Explore the Bible Commentary* (ETBC)
- *Preaching the Word: Deuteronomy* (Preaching)
- *New American Commentary: Deuteronomy* (NAC)

“Some decades ago, some parents began putting labels on items around their house. If you visited the home, you might see a label with the word “Curtain” pinned at the window. Or “Toybox” in the playroom. Or “Switch” beside the door. Labels were on many items in the house: “Chair,” “Table,” “Bathtub,” “Bed,” and “TV.” This is a type of passive information saturation. Studies showed that the system helps children incorporate reading into their lives without realizing they are learning.” (ETB PSG, 82)

such fear is to be overwhelmed with wonder before His greatness, power, and love.” (ETBC, 93) Proper fear of the Lord is a sense of awe, reverence, and wonder in response to His greatness and holiness.

Reread verse 2 (See Notes Box)

Explain: In this verse, Moses explains the way we demonstrate our fear of the Lord. Verse 1 reveals that he is talking about the law of God, and verse 2 begins with “do this.” This command refers to the law itself. “Do this”—follow the law—“so that” you will fear the Lord. We demonstrate that we revere the Lord by keeping His commandments. The verse goes on to reveal that in keeping His commands, we will *continue* in our fear. “*Do this so that you may fear the LORD your God all the days of your life by keeping all his statutes and commands* I am giving you, your son, and your grandson, and so that you may have a long life.” We “do” “so that” we will fear. We “keep” on doing so that we will remain in His fear.

Read Ecclesiastes 12:13 in KJV (See Notes Box)

Read John 14:15 (See Notes Box)

Explain: Having a reverential fear of the Lord and wholehearted obedience are intricately tied together. They are the proper response of all men and women to the reality of God’s greatness and His holiness. Nevertheless, there is a personal benefit that a person can derive from fearing and obeying the Lord. Moses tells the people to fear and obey the Lord “so that [they] may prosper and multiply greatly” in the great land God is giving them. We, too, will receive the blessing of the Lord when we follow Him well and revere Him.

Guide and discuss: Guide the group to page 85 of their Personal Study Guide and ask the question on the page, “In what way(s) has God lavished His blessings in your life? When have you been particularly aware of those blessings?”

Explain: The Lord can bless in many ways when we follow Him. However, as the history of Israel demonstrates, man’s ability to follow the Lord can prove elusive. That is why Jesus follows His statement in John 14:15 with a promise.

Read John 14:16-17 (See notes Box)

Explain: The Holy Spirit will give us the guidance, will, and ability to keep God’s law. If we struggle to follow the Lord in an area of our lives, we can call on the Spirit to help us. He will guide us to understand Scripture. As we study Scripture, He will enhance our will to follow Scripture. Moreover, He will empower us to act on our will to follow the precepts in Scripture.

Summarize Transition: Moses instructs the people to keep God’s law. They are to do so because of who God is. They also do so because “Believers demonstrate their love for God by obeying His commands.” (ETB LG, 103)

Notes:

2 Do this so that you may fear the LORD your God all the days of your life by keeping all his statutes and commands I am giving you, your son, and your grandson, and so that you may have a long life.

Ec 12:13 Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. (KJV)
(for reference the CSB reads, “When all has been heard, the conclusion of the matter is this: fear God and keep his commands, because this is for all humanity.”)

John 14:15 “If you love me, you will keep my commands.”¹

John 14:16-17
“¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever. ¹⁷ He is the Spirit of truth. The world is unable to receive him because it doesn’t see him or know him. But you do know him, because he remains with you and will be in you.”

In the next passage, Moses is going to help the people see how they can pass down their love of God and His law to the next generation. Look at Deuteronomy 6:4-9.

2. DEVOTED (DEUT. 6:4-9)

Read (or have someone read) Deuteronomy 6:4-9.

Explain: This passage, verses 4-9, is one of the most fundamental passages to the Jewish faith. It is called the Shema. “It’s been said that the *Shema* could be understood as a pledge of allegiance to Israel’s God...they declared their undivided and unqualified devotion to the Lord their God.” (ETBC, 94) The Hebrew word *shema* is the first word in verse 4. It means to listen or to hear. This is a key concept for the ancient Hebrews and for us to grasp. To listen or to hear for the ancient Hebrews is not just something they do with their ears or even their brains. Instead, hearing or listening relates to their actions. To hear God is to obey God. If one does not obey God, then one did not truly hear the words of God.

Ask: What does verse 4 first tell the Israelites to hear?

Explain: “The LORD our God, the LORD is one.” Generally, this is understood to be a reminder that God is one. It is an affirmation that there are not many gods to be worshipped but only the One True God. Also, the use of God’s personal name, LORD, reflects Israel’s personal relationship with Him. We can also be reminded that God is unique and holy, set apart from everything else. Understanding God in these ways sets the stage for what is to follow. His special nature requires the people to relate to Him in a special way.

Reread and ask: Reread verse 5 (See Notes Box) and ask, how would you rephrase that verse; or how would you describe a person who adheres to that verse?

Explain: In the New Testament, Jesus references this verse when an expert in the law asked, “Which command in the law is the greatest?” (Matt. 6:36; also Mk 12:28) Moses in Deuteronomy and Jesus in the Gospel list some means with which we are to love God. As we will see, these various means are meant to help us understand one great truth, but let’s quickly break down the list from Deuteronomy.

- First, we are to love God with all our “heart.” For the Hebrews, the heart is the center of a person’s intellect. It is the mind. The heart/mind can be equated with our “head.”

Discuss: How would you describe loving God with your mind?

Explain: First, to love God with our minds means we are to think about the Lord, His Word, and His ways. We think about these things by meditating on this Word. If we are to truly know God, we will do so by knowing what He teaches us about Himself using the tool He gave us, the Bible. Moreover,

Notes:

“To hear,” in Hebrew lexicography, is tantamount to “to obey,” especially in covenant contexts such as this. That is, to hear God without putting into effect the command is not to hear him at all. (NAC, 162)

Deut 6:5 Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.

TEACHERS NOTE: I am going to take heart, soul, strength and equate them with the Christian education terms: Head, heart, hands. The confusing part about this is “heart” is equated with “head” and “soul” is equated with “heart.” I use head, heart, and hands because they relate a clear understanding of what Moses is saying and they also related the intellectual, emotional, and physical response to God.

Chris Wright calls the mind “the organ of the will.” (Preaching, 258) After getting to know about God through His Word, we then have a choice to make. Will we follow Him?

- Second, a person is to love God with all their “soul.” In this case, the soul is “the inner person, you as you know yourself to be.” (Preaching, 259) We might consider our emotions here. If Moses’ use of the word “heart” is best equated with the mind or the head. His use of the word soul might be equated with our “heart.”
- Third, we are to love God with our “strength.” Wright says this means “with your very muchness.” (Preaching, 259) We might equate strength with our “hands.” We are not just to love God intellectually or emotionally; we are to love Him tangibly through our actions.

If we couple all this together, we understand that “They were to “love their God with every fiber of their being—in thought, emotions, energy, action, and ability.” (ETBC, 95)

We can see this in the words of Jesus. In both Matthew and Mark, He answers the question concerning the greatest law by referencing this passage in Deuteronomy, and then follows it with a reference to Leviticus 19:17. Jesus says in Matthew 22:39, “The second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself.”⁴⁰ All the Law and the Prophets depend on these two commands.” In the book of Luke, Jesus follows His reference to the greatest command to love God with everything by delivering the Parable of the Good Samaritan. Jesus shows that we love God with our “very muchness” and our actions.

Discuss: What are some practical ways that our love for God works its way out tangibly in our relationships with others? (our family, our coworkers, those in need, those caught in sin)

Explain: As Jesus’ example in the Parable of the Good Samaritan demonstrates, we are to love those who do not like us, we should help those in physical need, and we should help those in financial need. This is just one example of how our love for God manifests when we put our hands to the task. However, the task given in the Shema does not end with ourselves.

Reread verses 7-9

Explain: “It’s been said that if one generation assumes the things of God, the next generation will lose the things of God.” (ETBC, 95) Moses’ challenge to the people of Israel in verses 5 and 6 is not to “assume” on God’s law. Instead, they are to write it on their hearts and live it out. Then he challenges them to teach the next generation. He encourages them to be intentional about discipling their children. “In obeying and passing on that law to each successive generation they would continue as His distinct people.” (ETBC, 95) Moses does not just instruct the people to teach their children. He tells them how to do so.

First, they are to teach their children “when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road.” This includes leisure time and active times. However, we can apply this specifically to the modern family and possibly encourage us to return to practices of previous generations. The times we “sit in your house” can be put to good use. Usually, sitting in the house means family members sitting in different rooms texting one another. Or it involves people zoning out in front of a screen of some sort. We can use this time to be intentional. This can include eating dinner as a family. Family dinners can be utilized as a time to teach children good relational skills and how to respond when things do not go as planned or as they had hoped. (A friend acts in a mean way. How can we respond to or process that? A teacher corrects the child or gives them a bad grade. How do we respond in a Christ-like manner, opposed to responding in the flesh?) To intentionally disciple a child in this manner requires parents to reflect on their own day and process their own responses to similar situations in the adult world. Moreover, we can talk about the things of God in the car (“when you walk along the road”). Many times, the car ride to school or to town can be consumed with screens or mindless radio airplay. It is not often that our children or grandchildren are “trapped” with us. We can use this time to talk about the Scripture we read that morning, or talk about the worship song that is playing and what it means to us. Moses is telling parents to be intentional with their time. He echoes this at the end of verse 7 and reminds the parents to start and end the day with the Lord’s Word.

Second, he encourages them to be a people who are identified as the people of God, in verses 8 and 9. The instructions about binding God’s Word to their bodies and marking their home and city gates with the Word are probably metaphorical. Some Jews in the time of Jesus and even today put these practices to work by physically tying boxes containing God’s Word to their arms and foreheads or attaching boxes to their doorframe. However, it appears that Moses was saying let the Word be close at hand and mind to guide your direction and your actions. When this happens, you will be identified with the Lord. The homes and cities of the ancient Israelites should be marked with God’s Word, and the people who reside there should be identified as people of God.

Discuss: What are some practical actions you can take in your family life as a parent, grandparent, or family friend to implement Moses’ instructions here?

Summarize and Transition: Moses begins this passage by focusing on the individual members of the nations. He tells each individual to love God with everything they have. Jesus reminds us that this means we love others well when we love God well. Moses continues by reminding us that we should teach our children how to love and follow God well. As modern-day believers, we should remember that “We are to be intentional about putting God at the center of our lives, making everything else revolve

around Him.” (ETB LG, 106) In the next passage, Moses is going to continue with instructions related to teaching the next generation. We will see that it is important to testify about what God has done and how He has blessed us with salvation.

3. RIGHTEOUS (DEUT. 6:20-25)

Read or have someone read Deuteronomy 6:20-25.

Explain: We skipped over a few verses. In those verses, Moses (and the Lord) cautions the people regarding prosperity. They are going to inherit the land like a fully furnished home, and they will be successful and prosper. When this happens, they will be tempted to turn away from the Lord, but they should be diligent in following Him. Verse 20 returns to the task of discipling children. However, the setting is one in which children are experiencing the security and prosperity of the land. He is anticipating a time when children will wonder about the motivation to follow the lord (cf. ETBC, 97).

Similarly, if we begin following Moses’ instruction in verses 6-9 and teach our children from a very young age, there will come a time when they begin to intellectually digest what they are being taught. At that time, they will begin to ask questions like: Why does our family go to church instead of the lake on Sundays? Why do we give away 10% of our income instead of buying more stuff? Why do we make a point to act differently at the football games? These questions allow parents to more fully explain the gospel message. Moses’ encourages parents to explain these things using stories. We do not begin teaching kids using deep intellectual, complicated doctrine. We begin by telling stories of God’s work in our lives. The Israelites told the story of God’s work in the Exodus to save them. We begin by telling the story of Christ’s work on the cross to save us from sin. We also use the stories from the Old and New Testaments to teach kids about God’s nature and actions in the past.

Summarize and Transition: Discipling children can only be done by people who are disciples of Christ. We must grow in the Lord and then tell the story of that growth to our children. Moreover, “remembering God’s past faithfulness helps us to follow God’s commands today” and teach the next generation. (ETB LG, 107)

CONCLUDE

This lesson presents us with two significant challenges.

- 1) Are we going to love God with everything we are?
- 2) Are we going to be intentional about teaching the next generation in our home and our church?

How can you begin doing that this week? Think of one practical way to grow in each of those areas.

Notes: