

## Lesson 8

# Teaching Your Children to Love God

*Priorities, Attitudes, and Messages for Strong Families*

### ***Before you begin:***

#### **Read the Following Passages:**

- Deuteronomy 6:4-5
- Psalm 33:1
- Psalm 33:20-21
- Psalm 31:19
- Ephesians 5:20
- 1 Corinthians 4:7
- Ephesians 2:1-8
- Matthew 6:33
- Colossians 3:17
- Proverbs 22:6

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Deuteronomy stands as the final installment among the five books of the Pentateuch. It predominantly serves as a review, with Moses preparing Joshua to take over leadership and reminding the people of their responsibilities towards God. The arduous forty-year wilderness journey was reaching its conclusion, and the promised land was within reach. Given the emergence of a new generation, a fresh leader, and novel challenges and temptations, this review became imperative. Success in the new land demanded strict adherence to God's guidance and expectations.

Remarkably, what held true for Israel over 3500 years ago remains just as relevant for us today. As younger generations embark on their adult lives, they too face temptations to diverge from the righteous path. Contemporary societal and religious leaders seem to have forsaken the long-standing principles of Christianity, suggesting the need for more "relevant" and "innovative" approaches. Temptations all around beckon us to stray from the righteous path.

However, the fundamental principle imparted by Moses still holds true today. To succeed and lead our families as God intends, we must faithfully obey His commands. Embracing humanistic principles will never lead to true success. In Deuteronomy 6, we encounter Moses' sermon to the

people of Israel, who were on the verge of entering the promised land. Verse 5 captures what Jesus later identified as the greatest commandment:

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength."

This commandment forms the cornerstone on which all other divine instructions rest. Yet, it's not solely about mere adherence to laws. God seeks something deeper—a genuine relationship. In verse 6, Moses emphasizes that God desires our hearts. He calls upon His followers to internalize His words and obey them willingly, placing trust in the goodness of His commands. Just before this Moses instructed Israel with these words:

"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. Listen, Israel, and be careful to follow them, so that you may prosper and multiply greatly, because the Lord, the God of your ancestors, has promised you a land flowing with milk and honey."

(Deuteronomy 6:2-3)

Just as devoted parents set rules for their children's benefit, God has bestowed upon us expectations for our own good. By heeding these divine guidelines, we can prosper, multiply, and enjoy the bountiful promises of God—a good life while on earth and eternal life to come.

Teaching children to love God is a sacred responsibility for parents. The profound impact of instilling faith and spirituality in young hearts resonates throughout their lives, guiding their moral compass and shaping a biblical worldview. We can draw inspiration from Deuteronomy 6:4-9, and uncover God's wisdom on how to cultivate a deep and genuine love for Him within our families. By embracing the core principles of this passage—imparting consistent instruction, incorporating His Word into daily life, and developing an environment of love and devotion—we can successfully navigate the journey of passing down the gift of faith to the next generation.

## ***The Importance of a Biblical Worldview***

In the pursuit of nurturing a strong and vibrant faith within our families, we are called to create a lifestyle centered around God and His Word. As devoted parents, the desire to pass on an authentic Christian lifestyle to our children surpasses mere hobby or tradition; it becomes a heartfelt mission that demands unwavering commitment and dedication. In Acts 2:46-47, we witness the early Christians living out this Christ-centered lifestyle, and it serves as inspiration for us today.

In this lesson, we will delve into Deuteronomy 6, where Moses prepares the Israelite families to live in a godless and pagan culture, much like the challenges we face in our present times. From this passage, we will uncover three core values that must be present within our families to ensure success in nurturing a godly lifestyle: choosing the right priority, cultivating the right attitude, and conveying the right message.

By focusing on these foundational principles and seeking practical ways to integrate them into our

daily lives, we can not only experience success in our families but also equip the next generation with the tools they need to thrive spiritually.

## **Choose the Right Priority (Deuteronomy 6:4-9)**

In Deuteronomy 6, Moses reveals the highest priority in any Christian family: God. By prioritizing God and His love, you can distinguish yourselves from the prevailing culture, just as the Israelite families did in their time.

### **Emphasizing Love for God**

Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength,

Deuteronomy 6.5.

The key word that stands out in verse 5 is "love." Our primary motivation for choosing God should be love, not fear or mere obedience. Parents express their love for God in various ways. First, **encourage constant praise in your home**, helping create a culture where hearts are lifted up in worship to God (Psalm 33:1, 21). Teach your family to joyfully praise Him and acknowledge His greatness in all circumstances. Second, **verbalize your dependence on God**, openly expressing reliance on Him for all your needs (Psalm 33:20-21). Help your children understand that God is their ultimate provider and sustainer. Lastly, **lead by example in repentance and gratitude**, demonstrating a willingness to seek forgiveness for shortcomings and cultivating a heart of thankfulness for God's abundant grace and blessings (Psalm 31:19).

### **Taking Responsibilities to Heart**

These words that I am giving you today are to be in your heart, Deuteronomy 6.6.

Faith should not be confined to words alone; it should be evident in one's actions. Parents bear the responsibility of living and teaching God's will to their children. Both words and actions must align with your faith, especially in the seemingly insignificant moments that shape your family's values. Subtle acts of kindness, gentle words, and right responses during daily challenges carry a profound impact on your family's spiritual journey. By demonstrating the principles of Christianity through both words and actions, you engage in a "show and tell" approach to guide your children in their faith. Active teaching, combined with living out these principles in your own life, leaves a lasting impression on the hearts and minds of your kids, shaping their values and beliefs in a powerful and meaningful way.

### **Point Them to God**

Repeat them to your children. Talk about them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Bind them as a sign on your hand and let them be a symbol on your forehead. Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your city

gates, Deuteronomy 6.7-9.

Incorporate God's teachings into your family conversations and routines. The wording in verse 7 is continuous. Repetition is a powerful teacher, and the more you discuss God and His ways, the more deeply ingrained these values will become. Inconsistently pointing your children to God

will do more harm than good. What essential values need to be repeatedly emphasized?? **Make God the center of your conversations**, deliberately weaving His presence into your household discussions. This is seen through open and honest sharing, building an environment where faith-related topics are discussed with sincerity and authenticity, and avoiding lectures or preaching. You also should demonstrate to your family that **God and spiritual matters hold the highest priority in your lives**. By prioritizing prayer, worship, and the study of His Word, you exemplify the value of the spiritual aspects in shaping your family's beliefs and decisions.

### ***Choose the Right Attitude (Deuteronomy 6:10-12)***

“When the Lord your God brings you into the land he swore to your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that he would give you—a land with large and beautiful cities that you did not build, houses full of every good thing that you did not fill them with, cisterns that you did not dig, and vineyards and olive groves that you did not plant—and when you eat and are satisfied, be careful not to forget the Lord who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the place of slavery.

Deuteronomy 6 also highlights the challenges that prosperity can bring. As the Israelites entered the promised land filled with prosperity, they faced potential pitfalls. Today, we too experience prosperity and must navigate its challenges to maintain a strong Christian lifestyle.

#### **Avoiding Pitfalls of Prosperity**

As you navigate the blessings of prosperity, you must remain vigilant against potential pitfalls that could hinder your spiritual growth. **Guard against pride**, recognizing that all you possess is a gracious gift from God (1 Corinthians 4:7). Humility keeps you grounded in the understanding that your prosperity is a result of His abundant grace. Also, **be mindful of the temptation to indulge excessively in entertainment**, which can divert your focus from spiritual pursuits (Proverbs 23:4). Instead, strive to strike a balance, prioritizing time with God and His Word over worldly distractions. It is essential to **evaluate your family's priorities continually**, ensuring they align with a deep and meaningful spiritual life. By keeping God at the forefront of your decisions and actions, you steer clear of shallow pursuits that can lead you away from His purpose for your life.

#### **Approach Prosperity with Gratitude**

giving thanks always for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
Ephesians 5.20.

Thanksgiving must be a dominant attitude in your heart, expressing humble gratitude for God's blessings and entrustments. In nurturing a Christ-centered lifestyle within your family, it is crucial to instill in your children a spirit of thankfulness for the blessings they receive. By teaching them to appreciate all they have and acknowledge God's provision, you cultivate a grateful and humble heart. Moreover, exercise caution when prosperity comes your way. As you enjoy the abundance of material possessions and blessings, do not forget the source of your blessings. Your relationship with God should always take precedence over worldly possessions, and you must guard against allowing material wealth to overshadow your spiritual growth and connection with Him. By

embracing a spirit of gratitude and exercising discernment in prosperity, you ensure that your heart remains steadfastly devoted to God, even in times of abundance.

### ***Choose the Right Message (Deuteronomy 6:20-25)***

“When your son asks you in the future, ‘What is the meaning of the decrees, statutes, and ordinances that the Lord our God has commanded you?’ tell him, ‘We were slaves of Pharaoh in Egypt, but the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a strong hand. Before our eyes the Lord inflicted great and devastating signs and wonders on Egypt, on Pharaoh, and on all his household, but he brought us from there in order to lead us in and give us the land that he swore to our ancestors. The Lord commanded us to follow all these statutes and to fear the Lord our God for our prosperity always and for our preservation, as it is today. Righteousness will be ours if we are careful to follow every one of these commands before the Lord our God, as he has commanded us.’

When you prioritize God and adopt the right attitude, your children will naturally inquire about your faith and lifestyle. Your response should always point to God's grace.

### **Answering with Grace**

And you were dead in your trespasses and sins in which you previously walked according to the ways of this world, according to the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit now working in the disobedient. We too all previously lived among them in our fleshly desires, carrying out the inclinations of our flesh and thoughts, and we were by nature children under wrath as the others were also. But God, who is rich in mercy, because of his great love that he had for us, made us alive with Christ even though we were dead in trespasses. You are saved by grace! He also raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavens in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might display the immeasurable riches of his grace through his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. For you are saved by grace through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is God's gift—, Ephesians 2.1-8.

Respond to your children's inquiries by emphasizing that everything you have and everything you are is by the grace of God. **Teach them about God's grace:** Show them that your faith is rooted in God's unmerited favor and love.

### ***Important Takeaways***

There must be continuous spiritual training: Begin spiritual training in the early years of your children's lives. Your teaching must always demonstrate God's importance, by showing your family that God is the most crucial aspect of your life.

- **Get your kids a Bible.** Encourage a habit of reading and studying the Bible from an early age.
- **Speak of the joy in Serving God:** Share the joys and fulfillment of a life devoted to serving God.
- **Use pure speech:** Promote clean and respectful language in your household.
- **Prioritize spiritual pursuits:** Avoid getting too busy with secular activities so you can invest time in the Lord's work.

- **Build a happy home:** Create an environment where "home" is a place of joy and harmony.

We must not forget the profound impact we can have on our families by choosing the right priorities, attitudes, and messages. By placing God at the center of our lives and demonstrating a lifestyle of love, gratitude, and grace, we equip the next generation with the tools they need to navigate the challenges of the world while staying steadfast in their Christian faith. May our families become beacons of God's love, shining brightly and glorifying Him in all aspects of life.

### ***Pray for:***

1. The desire to prioritize God above all else and guide your children to walk in His ways through the small moments that shape their values.
2. An attitude of thanksgiving and contentment as your family enjoys God's blessings, while guarding your hearts against the pitfalls of prosperity.
3. Your family to be filled with God's grace and love, and help to convey the message of grace to your children, building a strong foundation of faith within them.

### ***For Discussion:***

1. How can we ensure that God remains the highest priority in our family life amidst the busyness and distractions of modern society?
2. In what practical ways can we demonstrate genuine love and devotion to God in our daily lives, setting an example for our children to follow?
3. How can we create an environment in our homes where God is a central topic of conversation and His teachings are regularly discussed and applied?
4. What are some potential challenges that prosperity can bring to our spiritual lives, and how can we guard against them?
5. Share instances where thankfulness and gratitude have played a significant role in your

spiritual journey and how they have shaped your perspective on prosperity.

6. As parents, how can we effectively respond to our children's inquiries about our faith and lifestyle, emphasizing the message of God's grace and love?
7. What practical steps can we take to integrate consistent spiritual training in the early years of our children's lives and make it a lifelong habit?
8. Discuss the significance of living out our faith in the small moments and actions that often have a lasting impact on our children's values and beliefs.
9. How can we build an atmosphere of joy and harmony in our homes, where the love and devotion to God are evident and permeate every aspect of family life?
10. Share personal experiences or testimonies of how prioritizing God, cultivating the right attitude, and conveying the right message have positively impacted your family's spiritual journey.