

HOME
Actions, Atmospheres, and Attitudes
Deuteronomy 6:4-9

What is the temperature in your home? No, I don't mean how many degrees Fahrenheit do you keep it in your living room! I am referring to the relational and spiritual atmosphere in your home. It is COLD and distant? Is it HOT and angry? Is it UNPREDICTABLE and a bit FRIGHTENING? Or, is it "JUST RIGHT" [warm and inviting]? You may say that you don't really know how to answer this, but I bet your KIDS do! **The amazing thing is, they do not CONTROL the thermostat; YOU do! Stated another way: You should not allow the least mature people in the home to dictate the atmospheres and attitudes in your home!** Who controls the thermostat in YOUR home?

Today, I want us to see in God's Word how parents can set the right temperature in their home. It can be a temperature that is warm and welcoming and just right for encouraging great attitudes and growing healthy disciples. **We just need the right THERMOSTATS!**

CREATE AN ATMOSPHERE OF WHOLEHEARTED LOVE FOR GOD.

Deuteronomy 6:4-6 NIV

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

The FIRST PRIORITY for Parents: Love the Lord with ALL your heart, soul, and strength. And yes, this means that you must cultivate a love for God that EXCEEDS your love for your spouse or your kids! **Your love for God can become the PRIMARY THERMOSTAT in your home, because it involves your complete self! If you love something OTHER than God in this way, THAT will become the primary thermostat!**

Heart – Your relational PASSION for God. ["Out of the heart flow all the issues of life."]

Soul – Your intellectual and emotional FOCUS on God.

Strength – Your physical OBEDIENCE to God.

Moses taught that these commands must be "tied" to us through external symbols and reminders. **Our homes should REFLECT the goodness and grace of God by the very ART that is on the walls and MUSIC that fills the air! [Vs. 9] Is this your home?** These images and sounds will IMPRINT themselves on your kid's hearts. **[Psalm 16]**

Of course, this means that the Word of God must truly be "on your heart." **This assumes that the Word of God is REGULARLY being read and contemplated in your own life! Is that true for you?** Furthermore, Christ himself must be your "first

love;" the CENTER of your LIFE. Then, your love for God will set the TONE and TEMPERATURE for your HOME. This priority must be constant no matter our family makeup! *The way you LEAD your children will naturally FLOW out of WHO YOU ARE rather than just what you SAY you believe.* **Kids see what is REAL, even over the "noise" of the supposed convictions we seek to push them toward.** INSTRUCTION must become a GENUINE passing on of our PERSONAL faith. This leads to another THERMOSTAT in the home.

CREATE AN ATMOSPHERE OF RELATIONAL DISCIPLESHIP.

Deuteronomy 6:7-9 NIV

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.

What do you SENSE in these verses (esp. 7-9)? UNHURRIED INTERACTIONS. INTENTIONAL CONNECTIONS. LOVING RELATIONSHIPS. Does this sound like your home? Have you ever even SEEN a home like this? Would you like for this to BECOME the RHYTHM and the consistent REALITY of your home? It can be! **But it will only happen when you truly KNOW your child.** These words speak of an INTIMATE connection with your child through observation and interaction. As you know them better, you can help to shape them "according to their 'bent!'" (Proverbs 22:6)

DISCIPLESHIP happens FIRST and BEST in your home! This is where the greatest impact occurs in a child's life before he heads out into the great unknown. *Don't undersell the importance of your role to your own heart.* That is a cop-out! Your children NEED you in their life. They WANT you to be in their life, even when they sometimes say that they do not want you! **[E.V. Hill]**. Moses taught that the Word of God must be "IMPRESSED" upon our children. This word is fascinating. It is translated as, "to teach," but it actually means, "to WHET, to SHARPEN." **It is the picture of a craftsman shaping and sharpening an arrow so that it will shoot straight and far.** This word is the impetus for the Psalm we have been studying each week. **Psalm 127:1-5 NIV**

1 Unless the LORD builds the house, the builders labor in vain. Unless the LORD watches over the city, the guards stand watch in vain. 2 In vain you rise early and stay up late, toiling for food to eat--for he grants sleep to those he loves. 3 Children are a heritage from the LORD, offspring a reward from him. 4 **Like arrows in the hands of a warrior are children born in one's youth.** 5 Blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them. They will not be put to shame when they contend with their opponents in court.

As parents, we are entrusted with the task of helping to SHAPE our children's character and SHARPEN their minds with the truth of God's word. As we do this, we prepare them and ourselves for that moment when we LAUNCH them out into the world. This will not happen accidentally. It must be INTENTIONAL.

***Key Practices for family discipleship:**

- Understanding the meaning of receiving Christ by faith
- Learning how to PRAY
- Conversations that help our kids properly interpret troubles and tragedies:
 - *Was this God's fault?
 - *Why did God not stop it? Is He powerless? Does he care?
- Tithing and Generosity [Importance of gratitude]
- Making the connection between trusting God and making moral choices
 - *How do you help them to SCREEN life as it comes at them on TV/Movies/etc.?
 - Our practice of examining WORLDVIEWS on TV shows
- Watch your words: Luck, Coincidence, Fate . . . or Providence and Sovereignty?

Family relationships must be GUARDED as a PRIORITY in our use of TIME. The key to PRIORITY is SIMPLICITY.

Parents must recognize the dangers of BUSYNESS.

- *How to set a schedule for your family:
 - Make time for FAMILY ACTIVITIES and not just INDIVIDUAL activities
 - Say NO to good things in order to say YES to great things.
 - Deprive your kids and yourself of some things in order to get other things?

***Integrate CHURCH LIFE and FAMILY LIFE**

There is one other thermostat that must not be forgotten in our homes!

CREATE AN ATMOSPHERE OF JOY!

***Our FAMILY GOAL: To create an atmosphere at home that our kids WANT to BE in, want to BRING their friends into, and want to CREATE when they are married!**

- Learn how to create OPPORTUNITIES and ongoing ENVIRONMENTS for joy.

***Is your home filled with MUSIC?**

- Importance of this to me as a child and as a parent. [Worship in the home]
- Dancing together!

***Does your home regularly experience LAUGHTER?**

- Games we played at home: Hide and Seek, Dominoes, Guessing game.

***Do you create times to GET AWAY together as a family for pure FUN?**

- Camping trips
- Vacations
- Individual DATES [Importance of this with my 6 kids!]

Do you believe in family vacations? Do you make it a point to spend time AWAY . . . WITH your wife and kids? God set this as a priority early on. It was a driving force behind the FESTIVALS that God instituted for his chosen people. **Deuteronomy**

16:13-15 NIV

13 Celebrate the Festival of Tabernacles for seven days after you have gathered the produce of your threshing floor and your winepress. 14 **Be joyful at your festival**--you, your sons and daughters, your male and female servants, and the Levites, the foreigners, the fatherless and the widows who live in your towns. 15 For seven days celebrate the festival to the LORD your God at the place the LORD will choose. For the LORD your God will bless you in all your harvest and in all the work of your hands, **and your joy will be complete.**

God loves for us to CELEBRATE him through rhythmic retreats! Has it ever occurred to you that WORSHIP can happen when you escape together as a family? God wants us to BUILD THIS into the rhythms of our lives. I think that it is important for our kids to UNDERSTAND this. God is not a Killjoy! He loves our laughter and has built his creation for us to enjoy. **Teach this to your kids.** Help them to FEEL God's presence when you are away together.

Are you creating great thermostats in your home? With God's help, you can!

Create an atmosphere of WHOLEHEARTED LOVE FOR GOD.

Create an atmosphere of RELATIONAL DISCIPLESHIP.

Create an atmosphere of JOY.

If these thermostats are in order and active in your home, you are truly blessed!

Let's pray.

HOME
Olive Branch Week 4 Facilitation Guide
Actions, Attitudes, and Atmospheres

Start talking

What is one of the funniest memories of your childhood or with your children?

Start thinking.

Why does it seem that kids are often the ones that create the environment in so many homes? Who should create the environment, and why?

Start sharing.

[Read Deuteronomy 6:4-6.](#) Why is this the foundational principle of how to create the right atmosphere in your home? How are you pursuing this in your own life? How does your physical home reflect your love for God?

[Read Deuteronomy 6:7-9.](#) How do the words in verse 7 reflect intentional, relational instruction? Why is discipleship in the home so important? Talk about key spiritual practices that you think should be taught at home. [Praying/Tithing/Reading Scripture/etc.]

Why is time so important in relational discipleship? How does busyness affect our ability to know and disciple our children?

[Read Deuteronomy 16:13-15.](#) Why did God put such value on extended celebrations away from home? How have you practiced a healthy rhythm of vacationing as a family?

Start praying.

Have your group pray for all of your children by name.

Start doing.

Lay out a schedule for your family for the next 2 months that includes spiritual instruction and fun!