

**Title: Prayer @ Home - Keeping Your Priorities in Line with God**  
**Text: Deuteronomy 6:1-9**

From Pew Research in 2022...

**Modeling the Future of Religion in America**

*If recent trends in religious switching continue, Christians could make up less than half of the U.S. population within a few decades*

*Since the 1990s, large numbers of Americans have left Christianity to join the growing ranks of U.S. adults who describe their religious identity as atheist, agnostic or “nothing in particular.” This accelerating trend is reshaping the U.S. religious landscape, leading many people to wonder what the future of religion in America might look like.*

*The Center estimates that in 2020, about 64% of Americans, including children, were Christian. People who are religiously unaffiliated, sometimes called religious “nones,” accounted for 30% of the U.S. population. Adherents of all other religions – including Jews, Muslims, Hindus and Buddhists – totaled about 6%.*

*Most people don’t change their religious identity. But among those who do, the switch typically happens between the ages of 15 and 29. <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2022/09/13/modeling-the-future-of-religion-in-america/>*

*From this article, it is projected that “nones” will outnumber Christians by 2070.*

What is going on and what can we do about it?

We can learn quite a bit from Moses, who is preaching a powerful sermon to the Israelites about to enter the promised land.

These are they that were the second generation who came up during their wanderings in the wilderness. Because of their disobedience, their parents were not eligible to go in, and they died in the wilderness.

This second generation will enter, but they must be diligent with their children so that they can ensure the continuation of the faith.

This is true for us as well in 2023. Churches must be all about this, but that will only do so much. Parents MUST take the lead in passing the faith on to the next generation!

**Main Idea: Dads and Moms - You Cannot Be Passive About the Faith With Your Children!**

What Should I do? What can I do?

Parents must make three powerful commitments in your life to impress the true Faith lovingly into your children!

**1. You Must Model the Faith by Obeying God’s Commands (vs. 1-3)**

### **Deuteronomy 6:1–3 ESV**

*<sup>1</sup> “Now this is the commandment—the statutes and the rules—that the LORD your God commanded me to teach you, that you may do them in the land to which you are going over, to possess it, <sup>2</sup> that you may fear the LORD your God, you and your son and your son’s son, by keeping all his statutes and his commandments, which I command you, all the days of your life, and that your days may be long. <sup>3</sup> Hear therefore, O Israel, and be careful to do them, that it may go well with you, and that you may multiply greatly, as the LORD, the God of your fathers, has promised you, in a land flowing with milk and honey.*

Moses is preaching his swan song sermon. The word Deuteronomy means second law. Not that there are two laws, but this is his second presentation of the Law to Israel’s people before they enter the Promised Land.

Remember, Moses will not enter the land with them because he sinned against the Lord by putting himself on the same level as the Lord when he struck the rock in anger and declared that **they** would give them the water, thus putting himself on the same level as God.

### **Deuteronomy 32:51–52 ESV**

*<sup>51</sup> because you broke faith with me in the midst of the people of Israel at the waters of Meribah-kadesh, in the wilderness of Zin, and because you did not treat me as holy in the midst of the people of Israel. <sup>52</sup> For you shall see the land before you, but you shall not go there, into the land that I am giving to the people of Israel.”*

It was not a great plan for Moses to elevate himself to the level of God, and he paid the price. Certainly, he did not lose his salvation given by the Lord, but he did lose his privilege to enter the Promised Land with the People he had led for 40 years.

So, he is not going with them into the Land, but he wants them to know how to function as God’s holy and chosen people within the land.

And you and I, while not the Jewish nation, must see the parallel between them and us, the New Testament followers of Christ.

Peter did...

### **1 Peter 2:9 ESV**

*<sup>9</sup> But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.*

And the first thing Moses tells them is they are to fear the Lord.

Fearing the Lord is a huge concept in the Scriptures.

### **Proverbs 1:7 ESV**

*<sup>7</sup> The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.*

### **Matthew 10:28 ESV**

*28 And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.*

Friends, we are not to have a cavalier and flippant attitude toward our Creator. We must be reverent. Even as His children, we dare not trample on His longsuffering and kindness.

God is not some benevolent grandfather in the sky who turns a blind eye to our participation in sin and the ignoring of His commands.

**Hebrews 10:31 ESV**

*31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*

And according to verse two, Moses' expectation is that fathers, in particular, pass this fear, reverence, and respect for God down to their children.

It's not the church's primary responsibility to accomplish this in the life of your child, it is yours.

And verse two says there is a benefit to this activity.

**Deuteronomy 6:2 LSB**

*2 so that you and your son and your grandson might fear Yahweh your God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments which I am commanding you, all the days of your life, and that your days may be prolonged.*

Here is the benefit. Living according to God's way is wise. Living a wise life means making wise choices. Making wise choices tends to lead to a prolonged life. Moses means this as a blessing upon his people.

Verse 3 tells them how serious Moses is about this! *"O Israel, you shall listen and be careful to do it..."*

Why?

*"that it may be well with you and that you may multiply GREATLY..."*

It is not just that their numbers would increase, but if they listened and were careful to obey, their influence on the culture around them would be profound.

Friends, if we are faithful in raising our children in our most holy faith, our influence in the culture around us will be profound as well.

It seems, however, that the culture is winning our children more than we are.

Friends, our first and best disciples must be our children. But this assumes we are zealous disciples to begin with.

Listen to the warning Charles Spurgeon gives to parents...

***"Train up a child in the way he should go—but be sure you go that way yourself." - Spurgeon***

Dads and moms, you are given an amazing opportunity to model obedience to the Lord in front of your children.

- Pray in front of your children.
- Read the Bible in front of your children.
- Serve and love others in front of your children.
- Husbands, love your wives in front of your children.
- Wives, respect your husbands in front of your children!
- Parents, make church a non-negotiable priority in front of your children!

Remember this profound principle – “What happens teaches.”

**Review** - Dads and Moms - You Cannot Be Passive About the Faith With Your Children!

You Must Model the Faith by Obeying God’s Commands

## 2. You Must Know the Commands to Make Your Faith Clear (vs. 4-5)

Moses makes a clear statement of what the Law truly is. For Christians, verses 4-5 sound familiar...

### **Deuteronomy 6:4–5 ESV**

*<sup>4</sup> “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. <sup>5</sup> You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.*

Verse 4 is known as the Great Shema - Which is a declaration that the God of Israel is one.

The word Shema means “hear.” Listen up!

Why is the Shema so important? Because of the culture of the Israelites.

The Egyptians, for example, had many gods.

During this time, ancient Egyptian religion was polytheistic, meaning that Egyptians worshipped a variety of gods and goddesses, each governing different aspects of life and the cosmos.

Here are some of the principal gods and goddesses that would have been worshipped during that period.

Gods like Ra, the god of the sun, or Isis, a goddess associated with motherhood, magic and healing, or Geb, the god of the earth.

But the God of the Israelites is one God! He is THE God. He is the all-powerful, all-knowing, everywhere present God.

### **Deuteronomy 6:4 ESV**

*<sup>4</sup> “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.*

And in order to know and obey the commands of the one true God, you must know HIM!  
Before you can love Him, you must have an understanding of him.

Parents, there is something here for you. If you hope and expect your kids to know and love your God, you must show them who He is.

And I would submit to you, a huge portion of people who profess Christ don't really know their God.

The State of Theology by Ligonier Ministries

**God learns and adapts to different circumstances.**

**U.S. Adult Finding:** 51% agree vs. 32% disagree

**U.S. Evangelical Finding:** 48% agree vs. 43% disagree

**Everyone is born innocent in the eyes of God.**

**U.S. Adult Finding:** 71% agree vs. 21% disagree

**U.S. Evangelical Finding:** 65% agree vs. 32% disagree

**God accepts the worship of all religions, including Christianity, Judaism, and Islam.**

**U.S. Evangelical Finding:**

2016: 48% agree

2018: 51% agree

2020: 42% agree

2022: 56% agree

**Jesus was a great teacher, but he was not God.**

**U.S. Evangelical Finding:**

2020: 30% agree

2022: 43% agree

**The Bible, like all sacred writings, contains helpful accounts of ancient myths but is not literally true.**

**U.S. Evangelical Finding:**

2016: 17% agree

2018: 23% agree

2020: 15% agree

2022: 26% agree

I hope you are as shocked by these statistics as I am. I hope it's obvious to you that we, like the Egyptians of old, struggle with worshiping gods who are not gods at all. In part, this is true

because we, as the church and we as parents, are not teaching about the One True God from the pulpit nor from the kitchen table.

Parents, if you don't know the God of the Bible, how in the world do you think your kids will know the God of the Bible? Especially because they are inundated with false gods each and every day of their lives.

Whether it is through the school system, Netflix, YouTube, or just being in the world, if they don't have you to help them navigate through the superabundance of false gods out there...

If they don't have you to help them understand why your God is the one true God and superior to all other Gods, what do you think the inevitable response of the next generation will be?

Parents - and Church, we cannot afford to take a hands-off approach to discipling our children in the ways of God.

Whether we care to admit it or not, our children are being indoctrinated.

So, we must indoctrinate as well with holy, pure, Godly doctrine!

And when they, by God's amazing grace, taste and see the God of the bible through a proper interpretive lens, they will, by God's grace, love him.

And this is THE command Moses gives the next generation about to enter the promised land.

#### **Deuteronomy 6:5 ESV**

*<sup>5</sup> You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.*

So, parents, do you love the LORD your God with all of your heart? With all of your soul? With all of your strength?

All is a big word, and Moses uses it three times. There is an encompassing nature to this command. One's heart, soul, and strength represent the whole person. Emotional, spiritual, and physical.

This is the command that we LOVE GOD with everything we have.

Do our children see this in our lives?

Is our love for God total and complete, or are their other, lesser loves crowding in for attention?

If you name the name of Christ, you must not be careless or, worse yet, passive when it comes to your love for God. Are you lukewarm regarding your love for God?

Remember the harsh words Jesus had for the church in Revelation?

#### **Revelation 3:14–17 ESV**

*<sup>14</sup> "And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: 'The words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of God's creation. <sup>15</sup> " 'I know your works: you are neither cold nor*

*hot. Would that you were either cold or hot! <sup>16</sup> So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth. <sup>17</sup> For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing, not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked.”*

Church - Is this us? Is this our testimony? If so, we MUST repent NOW!

There is a battle raging for the souls of our children, and what are we doing about it? How are we helping our families win this seemingly impossible battle as a church? As parents, what steps are we taking to obey the command to love God with our whole being?

Frankly, the mantra I hear from people is how busy we are. And I believe we are very busy.

- We are busy working many hours to help maintain a certain lifestyle.
- We are busy running our kids to this sporting event and that practice, this music lesson, and that play date.
- We are busy carefully cataloging our every move for our social media platform to put off the air that we've got it all together.

We are a busy people.

However, are we busy with the right things?

I will tell you this - **we find time for the things we love.**

Do you love God? Are you busy making disciples of your children?

If you were to ask your family, based on what you are involved in, what is your highest love, what would they say?

As you evaluate your own life in light of this command of Moses (which Jesus repeats in the New Testament), what do you honestly believe your first love is?

**In large part, Angie and my opportunity with our Children has passed. The cement has set if you will. We made our good choices, and we made our poor choices. I, for one, have many regrets. Regrets where my first love (God himself) was crowded out by lesser loves. And there is nothing I can do about it other than ask forgiveness.**

God has been amazingly gracious to us.

But I wish that if I were given the opportunity, I could spend more time cultivating my love for God in front of my children.

They would not see a legalistic adherence to God's revealed Word but instead a heart of love from their father toward the Heavenly Father.

They would see an unyielding zeal and love for God.

How do you know if you know the command that Moses lays forth in verse 5?

How do you even know if you are God's, to begin with?

Certainly, through the gospel.

But also, as Jonathan Edwards puts it - through your affections. Do you love God?

*“True gratitude or thankfulness to God for his kindness to us, arises from a foundation laid before, of love to God for what he is in himself...”— Jonathan Edwards, The Religious Affections*

In other words, if you love God, it is because you know God.

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### **3. You Must Teach the Commands Through Your Life! (vs. 6-9)**

Parents, who are the most influential people in the lives of your children? One article I read said this...

*Parents are the #1 influence in their children’s lives. Parents don’t always believe this – in a Parents Empowered survey, parents placed themselves last in the line-up of influences on their children – after friends, teachers and media. But when the youth answered the same question, they placed their parents first – before family, friends, teachers, and activities/clubs.*

[https://www.upliftfamilies.org/parents\\_1\\_influence#:~:text=March%2012%2C%202014-,Parents%20are%20the%20%231%20influence%20in%20their%20children%27s%20lives.,after%20friends%2C%20teachers%20and%20media.](https://www.upliftfamilies.org/parents_1_influence#:~:text=March%2012%2C%202014-,Parents%20are%20the%20%231%20influence%20in%20their%20children%27s%20lives.,after%20friends%2C%20teachers%20and%20media.)

So, God knew what he was doing when He providentially put you in your children's lives.

And I want you to see How a parent is to influence their children toward the things of God.

#### **Deuteronomy 6:6–9 ESV**

*<sup>6</sup> And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. <sup>7</sup> You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. <sup>8</sup> You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. <sup>9</sup> You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.*

Moses, under the influence of the Spirit of God, was so wise in his challenge to the Nation of Israel.

God’s Word is to be on the hearts of parents - If you lack wisdom, please know that the Lord has given us his Word for guidance.

#### **Psalm 32:8 (ESV)**

*<sup>8</sup> I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my eye upon you.*

#### **Psalm 119:11 ESV**

*<sup>11</sup> I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.*



This verse isn't just for children, it is for adults. The faith, once handed down from the saints is ours to hand down to our children.

And men of ABC - God calls you specifically to this task!

### **2 Timothy 2:2 ESV**

*<sup>2</sup> and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.*

But friends, you can't pass down what you don't possess.

Now listen, some of you know every stat from your favorite sports team. Some of you can name every gun known to man, and some of you know the intricacies of any car engine. Why? Because these are things that you love.

But do you love God? If you love God, you will hunger to know and love His word. Admittedly, getting into the Bible can be difficult, but if you do, you will grow to hunger and thirst after it.

What is your process to hide God's word in your heart? What steps are you taking to meditate and memorize the word of God?

Give ideas...

And when you know it, you are to share what you know with your family. Men, in particular, this is on you!

Do you see what Moses says?

### **Deuteronomy 6:7 ESV**

*<sup>7</sup> You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.*

You are to do this diligently!

*"with care," "scrupulously," "earnestly." Sometimes it means "early," "with haste" (Job 8:5; Prov 8:17). It may mean "industrious," "exacting" (Prov 10:4; 12:27; 22:29). The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia, Volumes 1-5 1. In the OT*

Men, is this you? Church, is this us?

The teaching of the Scriptures must permeate our conversations with our children.

Moses says we are to take the lead in talking about them. He gives six principles for families to live by...

- **When you sit in your house** - hard to do when dinner times have gone the way of the dodo. We sit in the same room together, each on our own phone or computer, consuming our individual media sources. We don't talk well to one another anymore. Let's change that!
- **When you walk by the way** - intentional time together

- **When you lie down** - Ending the day with your children reading the Scriptures to them. Praying with and for them.
- **When you rise** - When that little one wakes in the morning, hug them and let them know how much they are valued. Then take the time to pray a blessing over them. When I take Elliot to school, I pray with him.

John MacArthur says - *"The commandments were to be the subject of conversation, both inside and outside the home from the beginning of the day to its end."* MSB

- **You shall have God's Word in your hand and in front of your eyes** - When we have a problem, where do we tend to go? We "Google it." The Lord would have us to seek the Scriptures for it.

I heard it said that if you had the opportunity to sit down with the Lord Jesus and ask Him for help in various areas of life, He would respond, *"That is a wonderful question, I covered that issue in this chapter in my Word."*

This is Peter's point in his second letter...

#### **2 Peter 1:3-4 ESV**

*<sup>3</sup> His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, <sup>4</sup> by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.*

- **You shall write them out** - Do you know what Moses commanded the future Kings of Israel to do regarding the Word of God? Look at [Deuteronomy 17:18](#)

#### **Deuteronomy 17:18 ESV**

*<sup>18</sup> "And when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself in a book a copy of this law, approved by the Levitical priests.*

Isn't that something? Why would God have a King write out a copy of the Scriptures for Himself? So he knew it well. And so he would lead according to God's mind!

Moses tells parents to write out the Scriptures as well. And I am certain this wasn't simply to be some plaque with the Word of God plastered on it. The point was to write out God's Word so as to have it in front of their family at all times. So they would be led well!

What do we always have in front of our families? Phones, TV, YouTube, Sports, etc. These are before us, and we are being disciplined by them. And so are our Children.

Let me be frank with you, parents.

Coming to church a couple of times a month and sitting under the preaching of the word, whether in here or in the Children's classes, is insufficient to stem the onslaught of counter discipleship our families are being inundated with.

The Church cannot be the sole disciple-maker in your child's life, especially if your attendance is hit-and-miss.

Spurgeon said...

*"Let no Christian parents fall into the delusion that Sunday School is intended to ease them of their personal duties." – Spurgeon*

C.S. Lewis said...

*"Children are not a distraction from more important work, they are the most important work." - Lewis*

My fear is for you, parents, that you will refuse to heed the advice of Moses. The Church, in one sense, is only one generation from extinction.

My fear is that you will look back over your life of raising your children when the raising is done and wonder what happened.

Wonder why your kids love their sports more than they love Jesus.

Wonder why they love their comfort or happiness more than they love Jesus.

Wonder why the Word of God has little impact on them.

There should be no wonder if the Word of God has made little impact on you.

Do as I say and not as I do doesn't cut it as parents.

The elders and I have a biblical charge to speak the truth in love to you.

We see **deconstruction** and young people walking away from the faith in droves. Our kids, who once seemed to love Jesus, have now walked away.

How do we change this?

**First**, we recognize that God is sovereign and saves and builds His Church - we can rest in this.

**Second**, we are responsible to work and to work hard for those things that are important. Discipling our children intentionally and over the long haul is crucial.

**Thirdly**, to the children - be open and receptive. Your parents and your church are bringing you the words of life.

**Proverbs 6:20–21 ESV**

*<sup>20</sup> My son, keep your father's commandment, and forsake not your mother's teaching. <sup>21</sup> Bind them on your heart always; tie them around your neck.*

Church and parents. We must partner together to save the next generation!

*"In matters of doctrine, you will find orthodox congregations frequently change to heterodoxy (deviation) in the course of thirty or forty years and that is because too often there has been no catechizing of the children in the essential doctrines of the Gospel." – Spurgeon*

While we cannot change the hearts of our children, God expects us to inculcate them with His truth. It is not an option. God will use your work, parents. He will.

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### **Conclusion**

Apply this to **prayer**...

How will the children of this church learn how to pray? Is it the sole responsibility of the leadership of the church to teach prayer, or is it the responsibility of the Parents? Specifically, the father to step up and teach their children how to pray.

Now, to be clear, it is the responsibility of the church, of this church to help you in this area - hence this message and hence our push for DFH.

But ultimately, as this passage in Deuteronomy reveals, it is up to the parents to lead the charge.

I was a youth pastor for 10 years. And many parents had the attitude that I'll drop my kids off to you, Pastor Mark, and you fix them, you make them spiritual.

How could I fix their kids with one or two hours a week? I did my best to influence them for Christ, but my job was to supplement what the parents should have been pursuing all week long. My job is to train you up to do the work of the ministry!

And so, that is what I, the elders, and the leadership of this church want to do. We want to do two things.

1. We challenge you to teach your children how to pray.
2. We challenge ourselves to come alongside you and encourage you with words, resources, and our personal time to help you disciple your children. We believe this is our responsibility. Again, not to do it for you, but to equip you and help you in this pursuit.
  - a. Prayer Brochure - Review it with the congregation
  - b. Prayer Grow Conference - Sam Polson
  - c. Drive Faith Home Resource Center unveiling tonight (there will be cake)

d. Prayer Memory Verse - The Kids are working on this in the Kids Equipping Hour

e. 7-5-2

- i. Pray for your family 7 days per week
- ii. Pray with your family 5 days per week
- iii. Pray with your spouse 2 days per week

“Prayer should not be regarded as a duty which must be performed, but rather as a privilege to be enjoyed, a rare delight that is always revealing some new beauty.” – E.M. Bounds

Come back tonight for the unveiling of our very own Home Point Center – We will explain what that is. There will be cake and various drawings for books. 5 pm

I also want to know that we are retiring Eph 3:20. And moving to a new verse for us to memorize as a church. Philippians 4:4-7 which coincides with our theme of Prayer. We as a church and you as a family will memorize this passage together until the end of this year!

If God has moved in your heart this morning and you are ready to make some serious commitments before Him, come pray with me after the service.

### Connection Group Reflection Questions

1. **The Importance of Obedience:** Verse 1 begins with Moses instructing the Israelites to observe the commandments and decrees. Why do you think obedience to God's laws is emphasized so heavily at the beginning of this chapter?
2. **The Significance of the Shema:** Verse 4 contains the Shema, which is considered the central declaration of faith in Judaism. What significance does this hold for Christians today, and how does the idea of monotheism shape our relationship with God?
3. **The Centrality of Love:** Verse 5 instructs us to love God with all our heart, soul, and strength. What does it look like in practical terms to love God in this comprehensive way, and how can we strive to do so daily?
4. **Teaching the Next Generation:** Verses 7-9 emphasize the importance of teaching these commandments to your children and discussing them in various settings—while sitting at home, walking on the road, and so on. How can families today effectively integrate the teaching of God's Word into everyday life?
5. **Teaching the Next Generation about prayer:** What are ways you can help the next generation to learn to pray?
6. **Who are you praying for daily?**
7. **Who are you engaging with weekly?**

8. Who are you sharing the gospel with monthly?