

From Generation to Generation
Deuteronomy 6:4-9
Mercy Hill Church | October 9, 2022

Big idea: As we acknowledge Jesus as Lord, we respond by loving Him, treasuring His Word, and sharing His Word with the next generation.

⁴“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. ⁵You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. ⁶And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. ⁷You 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. ⁸You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. ⁹You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

1. Who is God? (v.4)

- *Hear*: Listen (and obey) -- pay attention! God is a God who speaks. We know God through the hearing (and reading) of His Word – God’s (special/divine) revelation to His people.
- *LORD*: Yahweh, the personal name of God, not any generic or abstract god. The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The creator and sustainer of not only the universe but humanity. The One who rescued and delivered the people of Israel out of slavery from the land of Egypt; the God who demonstrated His power through the plagues, etc.
 - Jesus: what He has done – His life, death and sacrifice on the cross for our sins, His resurrection and His ascension.
- *One*: the only God; God alone – not any other gods or goddesses.
 - The Triune God: One God, three persons – God the Father, God the Son, God the Spirit (cf. Ephesians 4:4-6, John 10:30, 8:58, 1:1; 1 Corinthians 8:6)
- *Our*: The God of Israel; a personal God – not someone else’s God.
- God who is all powerful yet personal; infinite in all wisdom yet knowable. God who alone is deserving of all worship. God who is transcendent yet immanent, holy yet merciful, judges yet loving – revealed through Jesus.

2. Our Response? Love God (v.5)

- In response to who God is (and what He has done) – we love Him
 - Cf. Exodus 20:1-17: The people of Israel obey God (10 Commandments) in response to God’s deliverance of Israel from slavery (out of Egypt).
- First time in the OT (Genesis => Numbers) where loving God is mentioned.
 - Previous responses included fearing God, worshipping God, etc.
 - Not either/or but both/and – “...to fear the Lord...to love Him...” (cf. Deuteronomy 10:12)
- Loving God with all we are – the totality of our being (re: heart, soul and might)
 - Cf. Matthew 22:34-40, Mark 12:30

3. Treasure the Word of God (v.6)

- What does it mean to have God’s Word on our hearts? (cf. Proverbs 4:23, Psalm 119:9-16) – it means our minds, our thoughts, our feelings, our responses, our thought process, our decisions, our actions, our values, our priorities are guided, guarded and governed by God’s Word

- From treasuring God’s Word to sharing God’s Word (vv.6-7)
 - God’s Word is not just for us but for others – here, specifically to be passed onto the next generation (children)
 - We can only teach and share with others that which we truly know, understand, or love (cf. 1 John 1:1-4)

- 4. Share God’s Word with the Next Generation (vv.7-9)**
- **What? God’s Word**
 - OT Context: God’s commands, the character of God (i.e. who God is), what God has done
 - Who Jesus is, the life, ministry, death, resurrection, ascension and second coming of Jesus – and ultimately our place in God’s story of redemption, the Gospel message and the Kingdom of God.
- **Who? Parents & Everyone**
 - Parents (cf. Proverbs 4:10-11, 2 Timothy 1:5-6)
 - As parents we have the blessing and responsibility to share God’s Word with our child(ren). Our children’s salvation is not ultimately up to us – but we are responsible to raise them up by imparting the Word of God, the Gospel, to them.
 - Our job isn’t just to raise them to be physically, socially, intellectually and emotionally mature– but also spiritually as well!
 - Everyone (cf. Deuteronomy 32:7, Psalm 78:4, 145:4; Colossians 1:28)
 - Addressing Israel, the people of God, as a whole -- both parents *and* the greater church community.
 - Mark DeVries, author of *Family-Based Youth Ministry*, while arguing for the importance of the family (i.e. parents) in children & youth ministry also contends that, “...our culture has put an incredible emotional weight on the shoulders of the nuclear family, a weight [he believes] God never intended for families to bear alone.” DeVries continues and suggests that parents need the, “rich support of the extended Christian family of the church.”
 - In *Intergenerational Christian Formation*, Holly Allen and Christine Ross quote a long time children’s minister who observed that, “Children will remember the stories and lives of people they have known in their faith communities more than Bible fact they may have learned.”
 - Mercy Hill Kids & Youth’s mission: “*Partner with parents to reach and raise the next generation for Christ*” – beautiful picture of the church partnering with parents together!
 - Not just a multi-generational church but an intergenerational church community
 - Not a just top-down but also bottom-up – mutual learning and growth together in Christ (cf. Matthew 18:1-6, 19:13-15)
- **How? Examples -- not prescriptive but descriptive**
 - Merism: rhetorical term for a pair of contrasting (or opposite) words/phrases to convey the whole (or totality)
 - “...when you sit...when you walk...” (v.7a)
 - “...when you lie down, and when you rise.” (v.7b)
 - Examples of physically having God’s Word as physical reminders on a person (v.8) and having God’s Word in public and regular view – at one’s home (doorposts) and at the city gates (v.9)
 - Phylacteries – small leather boxes containing verses of Torah worn by some Jewish believers when praying

- Mezuzah – written passages on parchment placed into a container and affixed to a doorpost of a house (or room).
 - Involves teaching/instructing and discussion/conversation; formally and informally; directly and indirectly; academically and playfully
- **When?** Anytime; all the time, often, frequently!
 - There is no wrong time (or perfect time) to talk about God, Jesus, the Gospel, His Word with the next generation – not limited to a Sunday morning or particular time or day of the week.
- **Where?** Anywhere, everywhere
 - There is no wrong place (or perfect place) to talk about God, Jesus, the Gospel, His Word with the next generation – not limited to a particular place or formal church gathering.
- In vv. 7-9 are examples of where, when and how. God gives us freedom for the how, when and where – what’s most important is that we are sharing God’s Word with the next generation (children).
 - Be creative – it’s about creating new rhythms but also integrating into existing rhythms. Use your personality, your abilities, your talents, etc.

Conclusion

- None of us have – or will – love God completely or fully. None of us have – or will – parent (or mentor) our children (the next generation) and impart to them God’s Word perfectly or fully. As we are confronted with God’s Word and commands, we are also confronted and reminded of our sin(s), shortcoming(s), and failure(s) and our need for Jesus, and His atoning sacrifice on the cross for our sin(s). It is at the cross, through God’s forgiveness, mercy and grace to us -- and through the power of the Spirit – which empowers us and encourages us to love Him with all that we are, to treasure His Word and to shared God’s Word with the next generation. And when we do so, we know it isn’t by our own (cap)ability or strength but by His grace – for His glory!

Reflection Questions

- Have you acknowledged Jesus as your Lord and Savior? If not, what’s preventing you from taking that step of faith and trust in Jesus today?
- Why is it important to keep in mind that our love and obedience of God should be in response to who Jesus is and what He’s done on the cross?
- What are some reasons or areas in your life where it is difficult to love God these days?
 - What are some things which command your attention, affection, energy or efforts away from God these days? Why?
- How has God’s Word been – or hasn’t been – on your heart these days?
 - Consider checking out our [Next Steps: Walk The Sacred Path](#) resource as one way to cultivate God’s Word in your heart
- What are some ways which you can help invest in and disciple the next generation?
- What are ways which we as a church family can grow in reaching and raising the next generation for Christ together?