

Biblical Principles Of Parenting (Part 4) – Dt 6:4-9

Eph 6:1-4; We're in a series on parenting, based on Prov 22:6 – *Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.*

That's our mandate, our marching orders

And the next principle to accomplish that, comes from Eph 6

[1] *Children, obey your parents in the Lord* [do what they say in all godliness and holiness], *for this is right.* [2] *"Honor your father and mother* [do them right]" (*this is the first commandment with a promise*), [3] *"that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land."* [4] *Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.*

For the purposes of *this* message, the last verse is the one I want to focus on; Especially the last *part* of it

Bring them up [or raise them] *in the discipline and instruction of the Lord*

Referring, to the ways of God; The training and teaching found in the Bible; That's the idea of *discipline and instruction* – it's training and teaching

The bottom line being . . .

Principle #6 – Teach your kids the Word (Eph 6:4; Dt 6:4-9)

That's the next principle; Teach your kids the Word of God

Teach them the Bible; The truths of this book

We touched on it last week with the gospel, but that's just the beginning

The discipline and instruction of the Lord is the *whole* counsel of God; *Everything* here Teach them all of it; Like Paul did with the church in Ephesus; *I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God* he said (Acts 20:27)

More than just the gospel, he taught them everything; Everything that points *to* the salvation found in Jesus, and everything that flows *from* it

And according to Eph 6:4, it's our responsibility as parents, to pass it on; To teach it to our kids; *Fathers . . . bring* [your kids] *up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.*

➤ And don't get derailed by Paul's use of *fathers* instead of parents

He does that, I think, to indicate that it's ultimately their *responsibility* as head of the home, but it's not *just* for them; It's for moms as well to teach and train their kids

Prov 6:20 says – *My son, keep your father's commandment, and forsake not your mother's teaching.* She too plays a role

And **Prov 31:26** – *She opens her mouth with wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue.* In the home, and out

So the father's responsibility in teaching the kids God's Word, doesn't negate or diminish the mother's role; It's both/and*****

➤ And if you're a JH or HS student – you're old enough to take some of the responsibility yourself; And should

Your parents can teach you until they're blue in the face; But if you don't receive it, if you don't lend yourself to it, if u don't want it or think much of it – it's all for naught It's not just your parents' responsibility to *teach*, it's your responsibility to learn

➤ But God puts the onus on parents; Teach your kids the Word

Which begs the question, how; *How* do you teach your kids the Word of God?

And the answer, is found in that famous parenting passage in Dt 6; Dt 6:4-9

[4] *"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.*

We can be confident that includes us, and that what follows applies to us, b/c the New Testament tells us that the Israel of God, is the church; This is for us

[5] *You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.* [6] *And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart.*

[7] *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.* [8] *You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes.* [9] *You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.*

The "how to" of teaching your kids God's Word, starts in v6

These words that I command you today [the words Moses spoke to the people on God's behalf] *shall be on your heart*

IOW they need to be a part of your soul; You have to know them yourself

That's the *first* key to teaching God's Word to your kids

• **Know it yourself**

Absorb it yourself; At the deepest level; Your heart; *These words shall be on your heart* it says; A part of your being; A part of your fabric

B/c if they're not; If you don't really *know* God's Word, you can't teach it to anybody You can't teach what you don't know

Not that you have to be a guru; Or know it all before you start

You just have soak it up yourself, and pass it along as you go; Teach as you learn

You have to *let the word of Christ dwell in you richly* (Col 3:16)

Only "the overflow of a *filled* cup benefits what's below" (Kevin DeYoung)

If you're going to teach your kids the Word, you have to know it yourself

➤ And that happens 5 different ways

1. Read it regularly – get on a plan and stick with it; Whether it's reading through the Bible in a *year*, or reading a chapter of Proverbs every *day* for a year You might even listen to it while driving to work or getting ready in the morning

2. Hear it preached – expose yourself to the expository preaching of God's Word, every single week; Where a passage or verse is explained, illustrated, and applied to your life

3. Talk about it weekly – like in a Small Group, or Men's Bible Study, or Women's Bible Study, or Alive and Free It doesn't matter *which* one, just get in one; So you can *talk* about the things you're learning, and how they apply to your life

4. Take a class – like a Discipleship Class; We're constantly offering them Right now it's *Frameworks* – our long-term, ongoing discipleship curriculum And *The Meaning of Marriage* – a 7 week class; And *Financial Peace University* for 9

Different classes offered at different times, so you can know the Word yourself

- 5. Serve in Harvest Kids/Students** – ministries where you'll hear *more* of the Word taught, or you'll teach it yourself; Or listen to verses that kids are memorizing Or explain what it means to a hungry student All of which will both *enable* you and *force* you, to know it yourself (**Summary**) It's the first key to teaching your kids the Word

- **Be intentional**

That's v7 – *You shall teach them* [the words of God] diligently to your children As in persistently, and thoroughly, and intentionally

I love this **quote** in that respect; Regarding our kids, it says . . .

We need to talk with them about what God has accomplished in our lives, in the lives of our friends, in human history, in his Word. Stories of his faithfulness should flood our living rooms and be stacked high on our night tables. Stories of his creation, his hard-to-fathom knowledge, and his extravagant love in Christ should be so often on our lips that the idea of forgetting him causes us to gasp. (Rachel Watson, Blog)
Well said; And it starts by being intentional

Unfortunately, we've relegated that to Sunday School, or youth group, or private school, and virtually *abdicated* our responsibility*****

- Not only that, but we've forsaken one of our biggest aides in all this – catechisms Which I only heard referred to as a *class* growing up But generally speaking, a catechism is a compilation of various questions and answers, for the purpose of teaching the basic truths of God's Word And it's a great *tool* in parenting

But in our corner of evangelical Christianity, we've all but thrown them away Mostly b/c they're associated with Catholicism or Lutheranism And, b/c we have an aversion to anything formal or traditional; Or poorly used The result of which, is that we've thrown the baby out with the bath water

But that need not be the case; Just b/c *some* traditions steered from the beaten path, doesn't mean *we* have to; Just b/c *some* use them poorly, doesn't mean we should Nor does it have to be used mechanically, for *rote* learning; Or embraced unthinkingly Catechisms, when well written and well used, can be *very* helpful

- So we searched for the best ones available, and adopted one from Desiring God Ministries that we think is excellent We're calling it ***Truth For Life – Knowing What You Believe*** (Booklet) It's not flashy, but neither is it basic; It's thorough and thoughtful and comprehensive Containing 118 questions, with corresponding answers and Scriptures for each; And a short commentary for particularly difficult concepts

And if you're a parent, I can't recommend it strongly enough

One of my biggest regrets in parenting, is not using a structured catechism in our home, to teach our girls the truths of God's Word

We *did* it; We taught them; And we did okay; But I think we would have done a *much* better job, if we had used something like this

Something to guide us, and make sure we were covering all the bases in good fashion

We can't go back, but we are going to send a copy to each of our girls; And, go through it ourselves; Becky and I; B/c it's not just useful for *little* kids, but big ones too

So stop by the Welcome Center or the Harvest Kids Check-in desk, and pick one up; Or two; They're free, and they're available And then spend 5 or 10 minutes around the dinner table each night talking about 1 question; Or maybe it's 1 a week***** Whatever the case, get over the awkwardness, and don't miss out Be intentional, and actually *teach* your kids the Word

- **Never stop**

[7] *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.*

It doesn't matter where you are or what you're doing, if you're going to teach your kids the Word, you have to seize the moment

You have to take advantage of those times of clarity, or questions, or softness – that lend themselves to bringing God's Word to bear

- And it's not very hard; In fact, the everyday situations of life provide so many teaching moments, we couldn't possibly exhaust them If you see a beautiful sunset, connect it to the *goodness* of God to *make* such a world for us to live in; And if you can, refer to a verse; *In the beginning . . . It was very good*

Or maybe it's a difficult situation at school, and you connect it to the *sovereignty* of God His knowledge of it, and control over it, and promise to work all things together for good for those who love him; Not that we will *see* the good necessarily . . . But that we can trust him to do it *Teach* them those things; And a thousand others as life rolls by

Especially at bedtime – *when you lie down*; Hands down, it's the preferred time for kids to ask questions and want answers; Sometimes to stall, but often times to learn That was Julia, our middle daughter; It was like a switch would flip when she crawled into bed, and the thoughts would start rolling Sometimes about her day, and other times about the Bible; Or life And we quickly found that those were poignant teaching moments not to be missed or rushed; No matter how tired we were And the same was true of windshield time while driving to volleyball tournaments

- The point being – never stop *formally* teaching your kids the Word, and never stop *informally* teaching them Connecting the dots and training them in the way they should they go; Whether sitting, walking, resting, or rising; Never stop

- **Keep it central**

V8; Referring to God's Words of instruction and training and truth . . .

[8] *You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes.* [9] *You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.*

It's a command that some people in Moses' day took literally

Attaching little boxes, called phylacteries, around their wrists and heads, and to the doorposts of their homes and gates of entry

Most of which contained a tiny parchment of v4-5

➤ But I don't think a literal application was the intent

Rather, it was a tangible way to illustrate God's desire and our need, to keep his Word ever before us; To keep it front and *center* in our minds and hearts; And homes

Never far from our memory, and never far from our grasp; Always there, and always available

And if you're going to teach it to your children, and your students – it's a must

If God's Word isn't important enough for *you* to keep it central, it will never be important enough for your kids to do so

And they'll never learn it like they should, let alone apply it to their life

➤ We tried various things in this respect over the years; One of which, was to was memorize verses together

And on one occasion, Becky put together this fancy-dance poster right out of Pinterest

She would assign certain verses, and everybody got a *star* if they recited them correctly

And though our girls latched on to it for a *time*, it probably would have gone better if *I* had participated; Even a *little* bit

Actually I did, but I was memorizing different verses at the time, and they wouldn't give me credit for them; So this is still under protest

But for Anna, all it took was the carrot of a prize, and she was off

While Julia and Jessica and Becky marched to their own beat

It wasn't the only thing we did; In fact now, we use a verse app on our phones; And sometimes send each other cool looking graphics of verses

It wasn't the only thing, but together with all the other things, like knowing the Word ourselves, and being intentional, and seizing opportunities, and connecting the dots . .

It helped us keep God's Word *central* in our home, and central in our hearts (**Summ**)

➤ That's principle #6 – Teach your kids the Word

B/c if you don't, you'll end up raising a spiritual runt; Someone drinking milk when they ought to be eating meat; Someone still learning, when they ought to be teaching

Pray – Lord, impress on us the need to teach our kids truth for life; Give us the discipline to do it well, and forgive us for our failures; We need your grace

Receive our tithes and offerings now; For the work of ministry both here and around the world