

Loyalty, Celebration, and Covenant Nurture in the Home – Deut 6:20-25

Biblical Parenting Basics #2

Introduction – Last week, we saw that the foundation for childrearing is covenant-promise-believing. Believe that and then go out and live like it. Ephesians 6:4 commands fathers to bring their children up in the training and admonition of the Lord (and not to provoke them to wrath). That training must come from the declaration of liberty, *a la* Deut 6:23 – *God brought us out in order to bring us in*. God did it. He did it to us. We celebrate that *we* have been brought out and that *we* have brought in.

In Your Home, Do Not Forget Who You Are (Deut 6:20-25) – Even though this generation was not there when Israel was brought out of Egypt, Moses instructs the parents to teach the children that “*we were brought out of Egypt*.” Your children need to understand that this is a Christian home, that we are Christian people, and that we serve the Lord (i.e. Josh 24:15). This is not covenant presumption; this is covenant faith and faithfulness.

The Natural Question/Answer Relationship (v20) – Unending questions from your children will come and should be welcomed, especially in a home of grace where you are safe and approachable. This is cultivated as you apply the Word to every area of life and throughout all parts of the day (vv4-9). Quantity-time is quality time. Your heavenly Father never tires of His children’s questions; neither should earthly fathers. Their questions assume you have answers, or that you are happy to pursue them.

Covenant Worship – The assumption is that the children are in the corporate worship time, for they are filled with questions from that teaching. Even very little ones are observing all the time. This spills out into family devotions and their imitation of children seeing their parent’s devotions.

Grace and Covenant in Your Answers (v21) – Our homes obey God first because He has freed us. Does your obedience smell of gratitude or duty? If you do not teach Eph 1-3 first, teaching Eph 4-6 will only become a life of moralism. Your home should be filled with the stories of deliverance and salvation (both personal as well as historical). Look children at what God has done and is doing for us.

In Addition – The context of this chapter (and the whole of Deuteronomy) is love from and for Yahweh (Deut 6:4-5). He loved us in our unloveliness (Rom 5:8) and so we love one another, like Him. Col 3:12-21 is a great example of what a home overwhelmed with grace and cultivating that grace looks like. Beyond formal Bible instruction, the home is where our children learn to love, to laugh, to sing, to forgive, to bear with one another. It’s not that God rules so much as it is that the peace of God rules. In Greek, peace points to the harmony that exists between the Triune Persons of the Godhead extended to us. Behind that in the Hebrew, peace points to a wholeness, a fat-ness, a fullness of life. Here is the Good News: you have that peace with God through Jesus Christ.

Merciful and Fierce God (v22) – Do not hide from your children the fierceness of God in His doings. His mercy is fierce as He delivers and protects His people – but He is not tame. He is the God of the earthquakes as well as the God of salvation out of earthquakes.

Celebratory Remembrance (v23) – Look for ways to make little celebrations of little deliverances, little victories, to tie them to God’s faithfulness – and then celebrate. Make holy days in your home places of great rejoicing and then come up with your own (Neh 8:10). Children naturally love order, repetition, tradition, and celebration. God uses this to nurture joyful loyalty – “these are my people/this is our God.”

Optimism in Your Approach (v24) – Will it go well for God’s people as they keep covenant with God? Will God through Christ truly save the world? What direction does your story go? Why is He preserving His people? What is our calling (Matt 28:18-20)? Covenant homes are the building blocks of the new world, the new humanity, and the new way of living; the salt and light to a dark and death-drenched world.

Sober Warnings in Your Words (v25) – Do your children see you and hear you take God’s Word seriously. Are you careful to observe all these commandments before the LORD your God and lead your family in this way? When we fall short, do our children see us take that seriously as well (1 John 1:8-10)?

In Addition – If the covenant of grace is true, if the promises are to us and to our children, then why have so many “reformed” families and cultures failed – where’s the succession? “*Because you did not serve the LORD your God with joy and gladness of heart, for the abundance of everything*” (Deut 28:47). More than any place, you cannot hide your true belief-structure in your home. This means there is much you will do and say that will instruct your children far more than during those “formal” instruction times. And so, as we lead our children, it must be as people who fear and love and serve the LORD with gladness of heart.