

Grace, Loyalty, and Covenant Nurture at Home – *Deut 6:20-25*

Parenting in the Promises #3

Introduction – Because of the character of God, the nature of His grace, and the promise of His covenant love to families, the cultivation of grace flows from the covenant community generally and into homes.

A Home That Does Not Forget Who They Are (Deut 6:20-25) – Moses' sermon, coming after the giving of the Ten Commandments for the second time, highlights the need for personal and familial loyalty to the LORD. 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. What does it look like?

The Natural Question/Answer Relationship (v20) – Unending questions from your children will come, 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. 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.

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.

Promises in Your Discussions (v23) – Whether the promises are manifest or not (and many are not yet and will not be), constantly point yourself and your children back to God's Word and His promises in dealing with every circumstance. How is He at work now in this situation? Sometimes we don't know why He is doing what He is doing; we always know ultimately that He is doing these things and that His promises are good. Use lots of stories to teach this over and over – and then apply them with faith to your home.

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)?

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.