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Sermon Notes

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## Saturating Your Children With the Word of God, Part 2

### Deuteronomy 6:1-9

#### I. Review of Last Week

##### A. Our Context and Theirs

- T.C. Pinckney: 70% of teens who are involved in a church youth group will stop attending church within two years of their high school graduation.
- Josh McDowell noted that less than 1/3 of today's youth attend church.
- Putting the two together: 67% do not go to church and then we lose 70% of those who do, that means that within two years of finishing high school only 10% of young Americans will attend church
- Scott Brown: **Biblical order for the church and the home has been unintentionally abandoned.** The Biblical equipping structures have been set aside, marriages have been dishonored, and fathers are not personally teaching their children anymore. Exemplary fatherhood has been reduced to taking the family to church and showing up at soccer games and recitals.
- The church is actually making it worse
- Last week I called on the parents of First Baptist Church to evangelize and disciple their children in 2006 as you never have before. I called on you to make the Christian faith of your children the top priority of your life of ministry in 2006. I called on you to have a plan for each of your children and to execute it, under the leadership and empowerment of the Holy Spirit, to have daily family devotions, and to meet regularly, perhaps weekly, with each of your children to guide them to set spiritual goals and meet them. I called on you to saturate their moments in every day life with the Word of God... to talk about Jesus and the Bible when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.
- Deuteronomy 6:1-9 was our focus passage

##### B. A Multigenerational View of Spiritual Protection and Prosperity

- American Christians need to rediscover a vision for a multigenerational ministry... a ministry to our children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren
- Great example: Jonathan Edward's descendents

Among his direct descendants were 13 college presidents, 65 professors, 100 lawyers, 100 missionaries, 30 judges, 60 physicians, 60 authors, and 80 holders of public office including three U.S. Senators, three governors, a vice-president, a controller of the U.S. Treasury, and many business owners and directors.<sup>1</sup> Jonathan Edwards set a godly example and pattern for his children, and as Edwards Researcher A. Winship wrote, "Much of the capacity and talent, intensity and character of the Edwards family is due to Mrs. Sarah Edwards." So the two of them worked together to shape a spiritual legacy of immense value.

Parental teaching and example have incalculable influence on succeeding generations. Children of divorce often get divorced themselves. Children of alcoholics frequently succumb to alcohol addiction. And children of godly parents tend to walk in the way of their parents. <http://aboverubies.org/articles/GenerationToCome.html>

***Deuteronomy 5:9-10 I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, <sup>10</sup> but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.***

C. The Centerpiece: Loving God with All You Are

***Vs. 4-5 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. <sup>5</sup> Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.***

D. Parents: These Commands Need to be Upon Your Hearts First

***Vs. 6 These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts.***

You can't teach what you don't know, and you can't lead where you will not go.

Parents, your faithful teaching of the Word of God to your children begins with your cherishing of that Word yourselves, day after day, in your private Quiet Times and in your lifestyle of Spirit-led obedience to His commands.

E. A Special Word to Fathers: God Has Ordained You to Lead!

We noted the focus on the training of sons, which is clear in the Hebrew but lost in some English translations:

***NASB Deuteronomy 6:2 so that you and your son and your grandson might fear the LORD your God***

***NASB Deuteronomy 6:7 You shall teach them diligently to your sons 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 up.***

We made it very clear that God intends both father AND mother to teach God's word to BOTH sons AND daughters.

But the focus here was on fathers and sons because of God's desired pattern of fathers leading their homes in godliness.

## II. Deuteronomy 6's Practical Advice

### A. Teach by Talking About God's Word

1. God has given to humanity the great gift of words... of language... of speech
2. The practical advice God gives to parents here is to TALK ABOUT GOD'S WORDS with your children

***vs. 7 Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.***

3. God's practical advice is to unpack the words of God to your children... to look carefully at each section of Scripture and impress the very words of God into the hearts of your children
  - a. Modern technology cannot take the place of this
  - b. Christian videos and computer games cannot take the place of a dad and mom learning how to TALK ABOUT Scripture with their children
  - c. Learning styles need to be taken into consideration...

Visual learners learn best by seeing

Auditory learners learn best by hearing

Tactile learners learn best by touching

AND a careful parent will study his/her own children and find the best ways to explain God's truth to each child... God certainly saturates our senses with His world

- d. BUT ultimately a simple Biblical truth surfaces

***Romans 10:17 So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.***

- e. God has packed His saving truth into words... and He commands the human race to LISTEN to those words
- f. So, parents, TALK to your kids about God's words
- g. Take the verses apart, discuss the phrases, study the meaning of the words

h. Speak the words of God to your children

i. Definitely speak the commands and decrees of God to them, beginning with the Ten Commandments

- *I am the Lord your God... you shall have no other gods*
- *You shall not make any idols or worship any idols*
- *You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain*
- *Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Do all your work in six days and rest on the seventh. For God made heaven and earth in six days and rested on the seventh.*
- *Honor your father and mother so that it may go well with you and you may enjoy long life on the earth.*
- *You shall not murder.*
- *You shall not commit adultery.*
- *You shall not steal.*
- *You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.*
- *You shall not covet your neighbor's wife ... or anything that belongs to your neighbor.*

j. Saturate them also with the words of Christ and about Christ

*Matthew 5:3-12 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. <sup>4</sup> Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. <sup>5</sup> Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. <sup>6</sup> Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. <sup>7</sup> Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. <sup>8</sup> Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. <sup>9</sup> Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God. <sup>10</sup> Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. <sup>11</sup> "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. <sup>12</sup> Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.*

*John 5:24 "I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.*

- k. Fill in with all the other words of Scripture... savor and work over each word

***Hebrews 12:29 for our "God is a consuming fire."***

Talk to your kids about the fact that God is a consuming fire... perhaps while watching a fire burn... discuss with them these words

***1 Corinthians 15:20 But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.***

Discuss those words... word by word... teach them what the word "firstfruits" mean

B. Teach by Constant Repetition

***Vs. 7 Impress them on your children.***

1. "Impress them" is NIV's good translation of a fascinating word
  - a. The word is usually translated "sharpen", like the work done on swords or arrowheads
  - b. Sharpening a sword is done with a whetstone, repeated rubbing over a long period of time... the mild abrasiveness of the stone hones the blade to a razor edge
  - c. The image is one of endless repetition over time

***vs. 7-9 Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. <sup>8</sup> Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. <sup>9</sup> Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.***

2. Repetition is essential to good teaching

Illus. Engraving of a metal plate with a manual engraving tool, like a stylus

The engraver has to go over the line again and again... with each pass the mark on the metal plate gets a little deeper

The engraving stylus has to be so hard that nothing will change it... and so it is with the perfect and unchanging word of God... it will NEVER change to the end of the universe, but it has the power to make deep lines into our minds and hearts

***Exodus 28:36 "Make a plate of pure gold and engrave on it as on a seal: HOLY TO THE LORD.***

The skilled engraver had to go over the gold plate again and again so that each mark was eventually made deep and permanent

So also the word of God must be endlessly repeated to engrave those same words in their hearts: HOLY TO THE LORD

3. ALSO the word can refer to piercing... as if by endless repetition the words of Scripture pierce their hearts and bring conviction of sin

Lou Priolo: “I sometime liken the heart of my child to a smooth non-porous surface such as a tabletop. My goal as a teacher is to have the child absorb as much of what I’m teaching as possible. If I were to pour the water of the Word onto that smooth surface, most of it would run off. But if I drilled hundreds of tiny holes in that surface (so that by the time I finished drilling it would be as porous as a sponge), then the water would be thoroughly absorbed into the table. Teaching in the flow of life, by showing how the Scriptures relate to the issues of actual life circumstances, is tantamount to drilling those tiny holes—it makes it easier for your child to absorb God’s Word.” [“Teach Them Diligently,” p. 20]

4. Transformed by the Renewing of Their Minds

***Romans 12:2 Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is-- his good, pleasing and perfect will.***

- a. Image: forest rock vs. river rock
- b. Constant flow of the word of God cleanses their minds, shapes them, prepares them, sets up categories of truth and experience
- c. As parents, it is your job to teach them how to cleanse their own minds by a constant stream of the word of God

5. The Forest and the Trees

- a. Forest = big picture... Redemptive History; the flow of the river of time, how God moved from the Garden of Eden, through the Flood of Noah, through the call of Abraham, through the Patriarchs, through the Exodus and the Law of Moses, through the conquest under Joshua, the period of the Judges, the coming of King David, the exile to Babylon, the restoration under Ezra and Nehemiah, the coming of the Christ, the Acts of the Apostles, the flow of Church history since
  - i) WHAT IS IT ALL ABOUT?
  - ii) HOW DOES EACH CHILD FIT INTO THIS BIG PICTURE
- b. Trees = details... how to read and understand each passage of Scripture... each genre... Law, Prophets, Wisdom, History, Gospels, Acts, Epistles, Revelation
  - i) Teaching your child to interpret each passage carefully and correctly

ii) Teaching your child to see how each verse fits into each chapter, and how each chapter fits into each book

iii) How do the details fit into the big picture

### C. Teach in Everyday Life Situations

**vs. 7 *Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.***

#### 1. God's Desire: Total Saturation in Every Aspect of Life

- a. The more you believe and study the word of God, the more incredibly relevant to life it will seem
- b. Parents' job: to TALK ABOUT God's word constantly
- c. Weave Scripture into everything that is going on...
- d. Apply it to actual situations in their lives

Lou Priolo: Philippians 2:14 "Do everything without complaining or arguing": applied to real situations in every day life

- You may not argue or complain when you don't like your breakfast
- You may not argue or complain when you have to stop playing
- You may not argue or complain when you are told to go to bed
- You may not argue or complain when you are told to do your homework
- You may not argue or complain when your sister or brother takes the last cookie
- You may not argue or complain when your will conflicts with the Lord's in any way

### D. Teach in Every Situation

#### 1. Every situation is a time to weave Scripture in

- a. While driving in the car... Speak Scripture to Them [e.g. our slow work through the Book of Psalms]
- b. While shopping at Kroger's or Food Lion... Speak Scripture to Them

***Deuteronomy 8:11-14 Be careful that you do not forget the LORD your God, failing to observe his commands, his laws and his decrees that I am giving you this day. <sup>12</sup> Otherwise, when you eat and are satisfied, when you build fine houses and settle down, <sup>13</sup> and when your herds and flocks grow large and your silver and gold increase and all you have is multiplied, <sup>14</sup> then your heart will become proud and you will forget the LORD your God***

c. While cooking dinner... Speak Scripture to Them

Remind them that God has promised to feed and care for His people, that cooking the meal is a great blessing, for the Scripture says

***Psalm 104:27-28 These all look to you to give them their food at the proper time. <sup>28</sup> When you give it to them, they gather it up; when you open your hand, they are satisfied with good things.***

d. While folding laundry... Speak Scripture to Them

Talk about Jesus' empty tomb, and the burial cloth that had been wrapped around Jesus' head was now carefully folded up by itself

e. While tucking them into bed... Speak Scripture to Them

Tell them how Jacob fell asleep in Bethel and had a dream of angels ascending and descending a staircase to heaven

Give them the sense of what is true: the Scriptures relate to absolutely everything in their lives... God's commands cover everything they do, God's promise meet every situation. There is no part of God's universe about which He does not say **"This is mine."**

**Illus.** Laying with Carolyn in the hammock a few days ago... we began thinking about all that God has given us. We started to play a game... trying to think of all the Bible verses we could in which "give" "gave" "giving" or "gift" appears relative to something God has done or will do for us

***John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.***

***John 4:10 Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water."***

***Acts 1:4-5 On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. <sup>5</sup> For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."***

***Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.***

***Romans 12:6-7 We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. <sup>7</sup> If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach***

***James 1:17 Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.***



***Luke 12:32 "Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom."***

The end result as verse after verse on God's gifts flowed through our minds was overwhelming gratitude to God, plus a sense of the full richness of God's word

## 2. God's Two Kinds of Learning: Book and Life

- a. John Calvin called creation the "theater of God's glory"
- b. God uses physical creation and the marvelous variety of life circumstances as powerful teachers

Lou Priolo cites the example of how Helen Keller, born blind, deaf and dumb, learned the meaning of words from a skilled teacher named Anne Sullivan who used a real-life setting to do the instruction. These are Helen Keller's own words:

"We walked down the path to the well-house, attracted by the fragrance of the honey-suckle with which it was covered. Someone was drawing water and my teacher placed my hand under the spout. As the cool stream gushed over one hand she spelled into the other the word water, first slowly, then rapidly. I stood still, my whole attention fixed upon the motions of her fingers. Suddenly I felt a misty consciousness as of something forgotten, a thrill of returning thought, and somehow the mystery of language was revealed to me. I knew then that 'w-a-t-e-r' meant the wonderful cool something that was flowing over my hand. That living word awakened my soul, gave it light, hope, joy, set it free!... I left the well-house eager to learn"

Clearly God intended the created world with all of its mysteries and experiences to be the theater of His glory and the university for Christian discipleship

***Matthew 6:28 "And why do you worry about clothes? Consider how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin."***

3. Mix experiences in God's world with direct teachings from God's word
4. Experience a Great Teacher... BUT the WORD of GOD ultimately must interpret and explain daily life

## E. Teach by Physical Reminders

***Vs. 8-9 Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. <sup>9</sup> Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.***

1. Orthodox Jews have taken these verses literally
  - a. They have small leather boxes tied to their upper left arm and their foreheads; the box for the forehead contains four distinct compartments,

the one for the arm only one... and these compartments contain narrow strips of parchment on which are copied passages from the Pentateuch

- b. They also have tiny portions of scripture written and inserted in metal amulets called mezuzahs, and nailed to their doorpost

## 2. Some Christians

- a. decorate their homes with cross-stitched passages or scripture posters
- b. write scripture on 3x5 cards and put them on mirrors to remind them
- c. in any case, it is clear that the Lord did not mean for our faith to be a secret, private thing, hidden in the closet
- d. it should be as obvious as writing on the doorposts of the home...

***Joshua 24:4 “As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”***

- 3. However: the key is the TALK... referring to Scripture, unfolding it, applying it
  - a. The scripture should be made to speak... to speak loud and clear about everything that is God's
  - b. The scripture should be unfolded and applied to everyday life situations

## III. Practical Words to FBC

### A. Family Devotions

#### 1. Keep it simple

- a. Make it understandable for each one's level

Illus. Daniel Johnson had a great example of his own father sitting down day after day with the Scripture, having their family devotions... it was what Daniel thought every family did, that's how central it was in his life... Then, when their son Nathan was three years old he was so excited to begin their own family devotions. He sat down as his own daddy had done with the big King James Bible and began teaching. Soon Nathan was crying and Lucinda asked gently, "Do you think it might be a little over his head?"

- b. Make the clear teaching of the passage your central point
- c. Ask good questions & stimulate lively discussions

#### 2. Keep it short

3. Make it clear and appropriate for each child
4. Do it daily if at all possible
5. Use available resources

BUY Lou Pirolo's book at the Booktable in the North tower

LOOK at the other resources their

6. Fathers: Commit yourself to growing as a teacher of the word
  - Some of you study the Stock Market or Real Estate market to know how to invest your money
  - Some of you study the technical journals of your profession to keep up on latest trends
  - Some of you study hobbies... how to improve in woodworking or model building
  - Some of you study sports... how to improve your golf swing, your jump shot, or your fishing technique
  - Fathers... make studying how to teach the Bible to your children the highest study of your life

***NKJ 2 Timothy 2:15 Study to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.***

#### B. Setting and Keeping Spiritual Goals for Each Child

1. I believe each father should take the time to consider each of his children, praying for them by name and asking, "Lord, how do you want me to help this child to grow in their knowledge of and obedience to your Word this year?"
2. Working with your wife, set down a series of attainable and measurable spiritual goals for them
3. Meet with each of them to go over those goals
4. Support each of the goals with Scripture that they will memorize
  - a. For example, list out some character traits you'd like to see grow in them... perhaps orderliness, self-discipline, a gentle/quiet spirit, compassion, honoring parents
  - b. Choose a good Scripture verse for each trait

- c. Challenge them to memorize these verses
  - d. Perhaps offer some rewards for obedience in these areas
5. Set up a regular weekly or monthly schedule to assess how they are making progress in these areas
  6. Take a copy of their sheet of goals and make it part of your daily prayer life for them

#### C. Discipline with Love and Scripture's Wisdom

1. Another key area is discipline
2. Learn to admonish and train each of your children's sin habits with specific scriptures
3. Train your child in refuting the devil's temptations with specific scriptures as Jesus did in the desert
4. Show them how sufficient the scripture is for godliness in every area of life

#### D. Saturating Life with Thankfulness and Worship

1. As you talk about scripture constantly "When you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up," be sure you teach them how to thank God in every life circumstance based on God's word
2. Weave thankfulness and worship into every moment of the day
  - a. "Thank you, Lord, that you have given us this day... as the sun is rising, I pray this scripture to you: "This is the day the Lord has made; I will rejoice and be glad in it"
  - b. "Thank you, Lord, for this trial. I know that Scripture says 'Consider it pure joy whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance.'"
  - c. "Thank you, Lord, for this good gift, because it is written, 'Every good and perfect gift is from above...'"

### IV. A Role For Everyone

#### A. No One is Excused

#### B. Everyone is Called to This Task

1. Grandparents with grown children: resolve to do everything you can to help your children raise their own children in the fear and nurture of the Lord

2. Parents with grown, unmarried children: keep exhorting them with Scripture to prepare themselves to raise their own children in the Lord
3. Parents with teens: you're in the battle now... struggling over the very souls of your children as they wrestle with the world, the flesh and the devil...
4. Parents with schoolaged children... day after day, shape their growing minds and developing hearts with the clear pure water of the word of God
5. Parents just bringing their babies home from the hospital... their whole future is ahead of them; they are starting fresh and clean; resolve to paint a world of Scripture on the clean canvas of their hearts
6. College students: someday, sooner than you think, you will have children of your own; prepare your hearts to find the godliest spouse with which to raise children to the glory of God... it will almost certainly be the most lasting legacy you will leave in this world
7. Unmarried folks: no matter what your past has been or future will be, you can still encourage, pray for, and help growing families to prepare the next generation of godly men and women

## V. Words of Comfort and Exhortations

### A. Few Things Make Us Feel As Guilty

1. We are very vulnerable concerning our children
2. We notice our own sins coming back to haunt us
3. We lament the waste of time while we see how quickly they grow up
4. We know that we have not been the parents of grandparents we should have
5. However, the Spirit does not come to make us feel guilty so that we will wallow in listless depression, unable to recover
6. The point is to learn what God expects from us from here on forward, what power He has for us, and to go and do it

### B. Hear the words of J.C. Ryle

J.C. Ryle said, "I charge you, fathers, take every pain to train your children in the way they should go. I charge you not merely for the sake of your children's souls; I charge you for the sake of your own future comfort and peace. Truly your own happiness in great measure depends on it. Children have caused the saddest tears that man has ever had to shed." Such sorrows are heavy enough when fathers have faithfully discharged their duty yet still live with a prodigal son or daughter. But who can bear the reproach of a stinging conscience that condemns us because we never brought them up in the fear of the Lord? How much better if we can say: "Son, we taught you God's Word; we wrestled for your soul; we lived a God-fearing example before you. You didn't see in us a sinless piety but an unfeigned faith. You know we sought first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. Your conscience will bear witness that Christ is the center of this home. We sang together, prayed together, and talked together. If you turn away from this light and these privileges, and insist on going your own way, we can only pray that all your Bible study, praying, and singing will not rise up against you in the Judgment Day—and that you will come to your senses before it is too late."

We must so live and conduct family worship that our children will not be able to say, "I am being bound hand and foot, and being cast away into everlasting darkness because of your parental carelessness, your hypocrisy, your complacency about the things of God. Father, mother, why weren't you faithful to me?"