

Sermon Notes for Feb. 3, 2008

**Priorities That Should Represent  
A Follower Of Jesus Christ  
“Dedication To One’s Family”  
Deuteronomy 6:4-9**

**Introduction**

**A. We Continue Our Sermon Series Entitled – PRIORITIES THAT REPRESENT A FOLLOWER OF JESUS CHRIST.**

1. After all, **SHOULDN’T** the person who claims to know Christ, who claims to be a Christian, have a different set of priorities than the person who does not?
2. In a real sense, we have an obligation to represent Christ to the world around us.
  - a. **in my opinion, the lack of a consistent Christ-like witness to a watching world has hurt the church more than anything else**
  - b. how many times have you heard those who do not attend church say, “The church is full of hypocrites.”
    1. if believers were more representative of Jesus Christ
    2. unbelievers would “want” to come see what made believers so different; as it is, they seem to stay away

**B. Today, We Will Look At The Believers Need To Make A PRIORITY OF HIS FAMILY.**

1. You need to know that the family existed **LONG BEFORE THE CHURCH EXISTED!**
2. The family may be the most foundational part of our entire world.

**I. The STRUGGLE Of The Family.**

**A. WHAT “HAS” Happened To The Family?**

**1. Definitions:**

- a. **John Maxwell** – “Home is where **life makes up its mind.**”
- b. **Chuck Swindoll** – “Whatever else may be said about the home, it is the **bottom line of life, the anvil upon which attitudes and convictions are hammered out.** It is the place where **life’s due bills come due, the single most influential force in our earthly existence. No price tag can adequately reflect its value. No gauge can measure its influence for good or for ill. It is home, among family members, that we come to terms with circumstances.**”

**2. Destination:**

- a. and yet **where is the family going today?**
- b. **statistics:**
  1. **for the first time in recorded history, couples who attend church are getting divorced more often than those who do not attend church**
  2. our Christian youth in school:
    - a. **74%** of our Christian kids say that they cheat on school tests
    - b. **83%** say that they lie to their teachers
    - c. **93%** say that they lie to their parents

- d. **63%** say that they become physically violent toward other when angry
- 3. our Christian youth in their **beliefs**:
  - a. **63%** don't believe Jesus is the Son of the one true God
  - b. **58%** believe all faiths teach equally valued truths
  - c. **51%** don't believe Jesus rose from the dead
  - d. **65%** don't believe Satan is a real entity
  - e. **68%** don't believe the Holy Spirit is a real entity
  - f. **70%** don't believe an absolute moral truth exists
- c. **What is happening to the children of the church?** Why are so many of our children falling away?
  - 1. especially when we see so many growing churches!
  - 2. it **has** to go back to the home
    - a. what is happening between the four walls of the home?
    - b. **WHAT ARE OUR CHILDREN SEEING IN THE LIFE AND FAITH OF THEIR PARENTS?**
    - c. why are we seeing so many casualties in the Christian home?

## **B. WHAT "COULD" Happen To The Family?**

- 1. We seem to be **confused** as to the roles of members of the family.
  - a. are the **parents in charge**?
  - b. or are the **children in charge**?
  - c. **ESPECIALLY in the most important area regarding one's personal faith.**
    - 1. my H.S. reunion – a woman taking her 12 year old boy to a variety of churches and synagogues to "allow him to make up his mind"
    - 2. some parents don't want to "force themselves on their children"
- 2. **The Scriptures are VERY CLEAR about the role of parents.**
  - a. **parents are called upon by God to lead their children into personal faith in Christ**
    - 1. by their **teaching**
    - 2. **and . . .** by their **EXAMPLE**
  - b. not only for the cause of that child but for the **generations to come**
    - 1. not only will your child suffer because of your lack of spiritual guidance
    - 2. but your great-great-great grandchildren will suffer as well because your great-great grandchildren may not tell them
    - 3. In **1874**, a sociologist named **Richard Dugdale**, undertook a comparison study of two families.  
**Max Jukes, born in 1700, was non-believer, who married a woman of like character. She lacked principle, among other indecencies, including the occult.**  
Their descendants included:
      - 310** professional vagrants
      - 440** wrecked their lives through debauchery

**130** went to jail  
**600** alcoholics  
**60** habitual thieves  
**190** prostitutes  
 Jukes' descendants cost the state of New York some  
**\$1,500,000.**

**Jonathan Edwards:** born **1703**, was a man of God and married a woman of like character. On their wedding night they committed their marriage to the Lord.

Their descendants included:

**300** clergymen - some missionaries and theological professors  
**100** professors  
**100** attorneys  
**30** judges, 1 dean of a law school  
**60** physicians, 1 dean of a medical school  
**3** mayors of large cities  
**60** authors of fine classics  
**14** Presidents of universities  
**3** State Governors  
**1** Controller of the US Treasury  
**1** Vice-President of the USA

### C. WHAT "SHOULD" Happen To The Family?

1. Today, we will look at a very interesting text regarding God's view of the family in the book of **Deuteronomy**.
  - a. the book of **Exodus** details Moses leading the people out of Egypt
  - b. the book of **Deuteronomy** details the people of God preparing to go into the promised land
  - c. the Jews were less than one month away from the death of Moses
    1. in a few weeks, Joshua would lead the Jews across the Jordan River into the Promised Land
    2. there would be "giants in the land" as well as 40 other people groups inhabiting the place where God promised His people a land flowing with milk and honey
    3. so, what would the Israelites do?
2. What was God's plan to Israel as they entered the Promised Land?
  - a. would He tell them how to **organize for a battle**?
  - b. would He establish the **leadership of the people**?
  - c. **NO, HE WOULD TELL HOW TO RAISE THEIR FAMILIES!**
    1. God established the critical place of the family in Jewish culture
    2. God's focus was on the family unit!
    3. let's see what He told His people about the family

## II. The SOURCE Of The Family.

### A. God PRECEDES the Family.

**Vs. 4 – "Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one."**

1. **BEFORE** the Bible speaks of the family, it **speaks of God!**
2. This is what the Jews call the "**shema**."
  - a. taken after the Hebrew word "**hear**"

- b. it is the prayer that every Jew says every day, especially during his daily prayers
    - 1. **"Shema Yisra'el Adoni Eloheynu Adoni Ehad"**
    - 2. listen to the Shema
  - 3. What the **Jew means** by this statement:
    - a. **BEFORE** you think of anything else in life
    - b. **BEFORE** you focus on your day
    - c. the Jew **FOCUSED** his heart on the **sovereign God of the universe**
      - 1. the all powerful, all knowing, all pervasive God
      - 2. the one who rules and reigns over all
      - 3. the one who has given us life and who sustains us every day of our lives
      - 4. He is the only true and living God who is to be worshipped
        - a. He is **not Baal of the Canaanites**
        - b. He is **not Amon-Re of the Egyptians**
        - c. He is **not Marduk of the Babylonians**
        - d. **He is the one and only Jehovah God**
  - 4. What the **Christian should mean** by such a statement.
    - a. **the Lord Jesus is the Lord, King and Master of my life**
    - b. in Him I live and move and have my being
    - c. I look to Him alone and depend on Him for EVERYTHING
    - d. **He is MORE VITAL and important to me than:**
      - 1. my job
      - 2. my friends
      - 3. my possessions
      - 4. **my FAMILY!**
    - e. **IF YOU PUT YOUR FAMILY BEFORE GOD, YOU WILL BE GUILTY OF IDOLATRY AND MISS GOD'S BEST FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY!**
- B. God PREPARES The Family.**
- Vs. 5 – “Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.”**
- 1. Whereas, the shema deals with the **FOCUS** of the Christian family, these next few verses deal with the **FORM** of the Christian family.
  - 2. God has called families and especially parents to relate to God **IN THIS WAY:**
    - a. “to love God with all your **heart**”
      - 1. the **definition**
        - a. the Jew understood the **heart to be the center of his emotions**
        - b. the heart dealt with the inner man and what was **most important to him**
      - 2. the **application**
        - a. BEFORE you can be a good parent, you need to decide **WHO OR WHAT is going to be number one in YOUR LIFE AS A PARENT**
        - b. you will NEVER be the Christian parent you need and want to be if your heart is not **TOTALLY sold out to Jesus**

- c. so . . . let me ask **YOU PARENTS:**
    - 1. Are **YOU SAVED?** Have you asked Christ to be your personal Savior?
    - 2. Have **YOU TOTALLY** given your heart and life to Jesus Christ? Nothing can be held back.
    - 3. Are **YOU ABIDING with Christ daily** by reading His Word and praying to Him?
  - b. “to love God with all of our **soul**”
    - 1. the **definition**
      - a. Jesus understood the soul to be **one’s passions**
      - b. this speaks of one’s **personality and what drives him**
    - 2. the **application**
      - a. **Do you have the SAME PASSION AS JESUS?**
        - 1. a passion for **His heavenly Father?**
        - 2. a passion for **holiness?**
        - 3. a passion for **others?**
      - b. notice:
        - 1. **Henry Ford** had a passion for cars
        - 2. **Thomas Edison** had a passion for inventions
        - 3. the **Wright brothers** had a passion to fly
      - c. Parents, **WHAT IS YOUR PASSION?**
      - d. how would you know if you have a passion like Jesus?
        - 1. like Jesus, your purpose would be the Kingdom of God, **NOT** your kingdom
        - 2. **AND YOU WOULD ALREADY BE SERVING IN THAT KINGDOM!**
  - c. “to love God with all of your **strength**”
    - 1. the **definition**
      - a. the Jew viewed strength as the power in your life
      - b. the “ability” to live for God
    - 2. the **application**
      - a. **you CANNOT live the Christian life in your own strength**
      - b. you will know if you are committed to Christ if you not only **WANT** to serve Him but **have the POWER to do so as well**
      - c. so, is service to Christ and His church a **struggle** or a **pleasure?**
3. To summarize, we must realize that God is speaking to parents **BEFORE they even begin the task of parenting.**
- a. that **BEFORE** you attempt to become a Christian parent, **YOU** must **FIRST become a Christian**
  - b. that **BEFORE** you expect your child to walk in a close walk with Christ, **YOU** must **FIRST have that walk yourself**
  - c. that **BEFORE** you expect that your child put Christ first in their life, **YOU** must **put Christ first in your life**

**d. THAT’S why some of you are failing as parents – YOU HAVEN’T FULFILLED THE SHEMA YET!**

1. you are not sure who is Lord of your life
2. you haven’t died to self and given your life to Christ
3. thus, you aren’t totally committed to the ministry of Christ
4. notice what the Scripture says in **Vs. 6** – “These commandments that I give you are to be **upon YOUR HEARTS.**”
  - a. the word upon means “**upon**” or “**in** your hearts”
  - b. these truths must consume you, fill you and drive you as parents **FIRST!**

**III. The SANCTIFICATION Of The Family.**

**A. Parents Are Called To TEACH.**

**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.”

1. The **definition** of the word impress.
  - a. **to teach**
  - b. to sharpen
  - c. to teach incisively
  - d. to send the truth into your children as if it were a sharp knife
2. The **application** of the word impress.
  - a. once **YOU** understand who God is **IN YOUR LIFE, YOU** are called to teach what you know about God to your children; impress them **ON YOUR CHILDREN**
  - b. **WITHOUT A DOUBT, IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PARENTS TO TEACH THEIR CHILDREN ABOUT GOD.**
    1. when this was written by Moses, there were **no**:
      - a. Sunday schools
      - b. Youth Pastors
      - c. Children’s Pastors
      - d. Young Life, Campus Life
      - e. curriculum
      - f. youth conferences
    2. when this was written by Moses, **THERE WERE NO CHURCHES!**
      - a. **there was simply a group of people headed to the promised land**
      - b. the people couldn’t depend on Moses or the elders to teach their children; there were too many of them to take care of
    3. so, for the Christian parent, this means that you **CANNOT** and **MUST NOT DEPEND on the church** or the Christian school to spiritually educate your child
      - a. The **Puritans** were right when they referred to the home as a **little church**. They were **so serious** about this that if a **father neglected** the spiritual training of his family, he could be brought before the elders for **church discipline**, and if he refused to take his leadership role

seriously, he could be **disbarred from taking communion.**

- b. **Dr. Ray Stedman** – “Notice the **pronoun** that is used. ‘**You** shall teach these diligently to your children,’ not they, **you!** This is **not** the job of the Sunday School, this is **not** the church's responsibility, this is **your** task! The Sunday School and church cannot substitute for the parents in this realm. **At best they are a supplement.** Here is a responsibility that is nontransferable. **This is not a new truth.** Over twenty-three hundred years ago, **wise old Socrates in Athens** said to the people of the city, ‘Could I climb the highest place in Athens, I would lift my voice and proclaim, Fellow citizens! Why do you turn and scrape every stone to gather wealth, **and take so little care of your children,** to whom one day you must **relinquish it all?**”

## **B. Parents Are Called To TALK.**

**Vs. 7b** – “**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. This word “**talk**” suggests the natural way parents should “communicate” the Christian life to their children.
2. In my opinion, this part of the verse which focuses on “**talking**” **about your faith to your children** makes a **greater impact** than the “**teaching**” of your children.
  - a. there is something innate within a child; a heart that tells them the truth
    1. **a child’s heart is so trusting, so believing and so unsuspecting . . . UNTIL THEY ARE GIVEN A REASON NOT TO BELIEVE**
    2. so that when you teach a child something with your mouth, **but contradict that teaching with your life,** you are **ACTUALLY** teaching your child how to “effectually live as an unbeliever”
  - b. **THAT’S** why God places so much emphasis on “**practicing what you preach**”
  - c. notice what **John 13:14-15** says: “Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet. **I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.**”
  - d. **Pastor Terry Coomer** - Ways to “**walk your talk**” with your children:
    1. Make sure your children **hear you pray,** and in your prayer let them hear you calling their name to God. **Teach** your children how to pray.
    2. Make sure you **show your children how to do personal devotions** and that **they see you read the Bible.** Make sure you read and explain the Bible to your children.
    3. Make sure you **put God first in your life in giving.** Make sure that you explain that all money is God's money not just 10 percent. As your children are given money or work for money **make sure they understand that giving begins at an early age.**

4. Make sure your children **see you submit yourself to the Holy Spirit.**
5. **Make sure you share your personal testimony of salvation with your children.** Tell them **how you got saved.**
6. Make sure your children **hear you give a clear presentation of the gospel to an unsaved person.** Teach your children **how to give that presentation.**

### C. Parents Are Called To TRANSFER.

1. Notice **HOW** God calls us to live our lives before our children. We are to “teach them” when:

**Vs. 7b** – “Talk about them when you **sit at home** and when you walk **along the road**, when you **lie down** and when you **get up.**”

#### a. “When you **sit at home.**”

1. perhaps you are at the **dinner table at a meal**

- a. I do not believe that this text is talking about family devotions particularly
- b. instead, it is a time spent around the dinner table eating and talking or on the front porch
- c. but the Lord is **SUCH A PRESENCE** and influence in your family that the conversation **naturally shifts to spiritual matters**
- d. as Christians, every conversation at the dinner table does not HAVE to be on spiritual matters, but if you NEVER speak of the Lord or things of faith at meal times, I have to wonder if the Lord is a priority at all!
  1. if ALL that you speak of is UT sports
  2. if ALL that you speak of is gossiping about others

2. perhaps you are sitting around **reading the newspaper or watching television**

- a. and you read about all of the events of our world today
  1. October 1987 – the market crash; me in Memphis
  2. September 11 – the crash of the Twin Towers
- b. don’t you wonder what God is “up to”
  1. if we believe in a Sovereign God, then what has that Sovereign God allowed to happen?
  2. what is the Biblical response of a Biblical Christian?

#### b. “When you **walk along the road.**”

1. it is strongly implied here that this is simply a walk “to or from” somewhere
  - a. the Jewish father is not carrying the Torah from which to read
  - b. there is no set time for the father to teach his children while they walk to town
  - c. maybe they are on a hike and are overwhelmed by nature



2. **the time together is not established as a teaching time and yet the parent “naturally” speaks of the creator God:**
  - a. the child learns that to speak of spiritual matters ALL THE TIME is normal
  - b. **my story – When first saved, I was impressed at how other people talked of spiritually matters just like they were “talking about baseball”**
    1. had a “crush” on a girl; walked on the beach; she would not stop talking about Jesus!
    2. walked in a room full of high schoolers PRAYING!!!
  - c. THIS IS HOW OUR CONVERSATIONS MUST TAKE PLACE:
    1. naturally
    2. unforced
    3. from the heart
  - d. **Brad, on a golf outing – asked me a great spiritual question**
- c. **“When you lie down.”**
  1. is the writer referring to that time at the end of the day when a child is put to bed?
    - a. a time when a child will have a million questions
      1. some children use this as a “stalling tactic”
      2. while other questions come from a child’s inquisitive heart
    - b. don’t miss the **“open-window phenomenon”**
      1. that time when a child “lets you into their heart”
      2. teenage daughter to her mom – “Mom, did you go to prom?”
        - a. is this a question about the mother?
        - b. or is this a question about the daughter?
  2. bedtime seems to be that time when all of the questions and pressures of life come to bear
    - a. you’re finally quiet
    - b. the day and its competition for your time has ended
    - c. it is a perfect time to talk
- d. **“When you get up.”**
  1. our relationship with Christ will be most clearly seen **when we get up in the morning**
    - a. if we are committed to Christ and His Lordship, we should face the day and say . . .
      1. **“Lord, this is the day you have made – let us rejoice and be glad in it.”**
      2. **“How do you want to use me today?”**
    - b. **if we are not committed to the Lordship of Christ, it will simply be another boring, predictable day**
      1. **I dread the day ahead.**

## 2. WHERE IS YOUR BELIEF IN A LIVING, SOVEREIGN GOD?

2. what a time to teach your children about expecting God to move that day!
  - a. **what does God have in store for me today?**
  - b. the FIRST thing that I will do before I head out the door is spend time with Christ and then face the day with Him

2. So, you see that more is “caught than taught.”

### IV. The SUCCESS Of The Family.

#### A. The FAILURE Of Jewish Literalism.

**Vs. 8-9** – “Tie them as **symbols on your hands** and bind them **on your foreheads**. Write them on the **doorframes** of your houses and on your **gates**.”

1. The **MISTAKE** that the Jews made concerning these verses is that **THEY TOOK THESE WORDS LITERALLY**.
  - a. when God’s Word said – “Tie them as **symbols on your hands**.”
    1. the Jews thought that God LITERALLY meant to take these words and verses and tie them around your hands and foreheads
      - a. so they built little boxes called **phylacteries**, put these verses in the boxes AND TIED THEM ON THEIR WRISTS AND FOREHEADS!
      - b. so, today, before daily prayers, you will see the Orthodox Jew with these little black boxes tied to their wrist and forehead
      - c. show slides of phylacteries
    2. WHAT POSSIBLE GOOD WOULD THIS DO TO PUT WORDS IN A BOX?
  - b. and, when God said “Write them on the **frames of your houses** and on your **gates**”
    1. they built a box called a **mezuzah** and attached it with the Scriptures inside to the doorpost of their homes
    2. once again, the Jew “LITERALLY” fulfilled God’s commands
2. The Jews never seemed to make the connection between their beliefs and their actions.
3. God, however, meant for His people to take these verses PERSONALLY, NOT LITERALLY!

#### B. The SUCCESS of Biblical Love.

1. What God **DID NOT MEAN** by His words:
  - a. while we ARE to be committed to truths of Scripture
  - b. the “method” of talking to your children in such natural ways about spiritual matters PROVES that our spirituality **is not about following some list of rules!**
    1. how absurd it was to think that God meant for parents to teach our children theologically ONLY!
    2. and that your hearts did not have to match the words that were put into those little boxes!

3. **Dr. Ray Stedman** - In this connection perhaps I can say a word about **family worship**. A number of people have been concerned about this. In fact, a lady in the congregation wrote to me this week and suggested very graciously that I not say anything which would give the impression that I am against family worship. I am not. As long as family worship grows out of this kind of **universal, life-related exposure to the nature and power of God, it is entirely proper**.

But what **I am against** is the **mechanical imposing** of this observance upon the family as the **only time when you are "religious."** It is **hurtful, damaging, deadly**, to insist that you have family worship at such-and-such a time every day, and **yet never to mention God or think about him otherwise**, but to allow secularism to pervade the rest of life. **Then it is terribly wrong."**

4. as Christian parents we believe:
- a. in the **Bible**, but do we read it and meditate in it?
  - b. in **prayer**, but do we actually pray, especially with our children?
  - c. in **evangelism**, but we never tell another person about salvation?
  - d. "Not long ago, the **U.S. Senate conducted a serious debate over the issue of prayer in the public schools**. Just outside of Washington, D.C., one United States senator who had been involved in the debate went to speak at a **church's men's breakfast**. In his address, he explained the current debate and then asked those men who were present to **raise their hands if they supported prayer in the schools**. Almost all the hands in the group went up. Unexpectedly, he then asked the men another question: 'How many of you present today have **prayed aloud with your children at home in the last week?**' **Only two hands went up."**

2. What God **MEANT** by His words:
- a. the Word of God should be on our **hands** ("**Tie them on as symbols on your hands**")
    1. Christ in our lives should "**touch**" **everything**
    2. and we don't touch anything without Christ affecting "that touch"
    3. when we "touch" our children, we would touch them as Jesus touched children
  - b. the Word of God should be on our **mind** ("**Bind them on your foreheads**")
    1. and we don't **think about anything** without Christ directing our thoughts
    2. He is constantly in our minds
    3. we can't help but think "Biblically" about everything!

4. when we make decisions, we would think about it the same way that Jesus would
- c. and the box on the **doorposts of our homes** (“**Write them on the doorframes**”)
  1. you are **entering a Christian home where people are:**
    - a. in love with Jesus
    - b. where we are attempting to live a Godly life
    - c. where you can see the gospel in action
  2. and that the world is INVITED into this Christian home
    - a. so that they can SEE what the gospel does to people
    - b. the only “box” that the gospel is in is in the “box of your heart” or the “box of your home”

### Conclusion:

1. Parents. God is telling you that it is **YOUR RESPONSIBILITY** to teach and talk to your children about Jesus.
2. But it all must **FIRST start with you as PARENTS.**
  - a. do **YOU** have that **vital, real, growing relationship with Jesus,**
  - b. that **is SO AFFECTING YOUR LIFE** that you can’t help but tell it and **SHOW** it to your children every day?
  - c. your children will **not have to be “taught” the gospel,** for they will **“SEE IT”** in the everyday lives of their parents
3. But, parents, it is **NOT** enough for you to simply “teach” your children, your children must be able to “see Christ” in you as a living example.
  - a. After all, parents, what you are **“living with your life”** is far louder than what you are **“saying with your lips.”**
  - b. A story told by a son about his father - The cold Iowa dawn was still an hour off, but already Dad and I had finished a big job on our farm. We’d loaded **100 head of cattle for market** into two waiting semi-trailers.

**I was 16** and this was the first time I’d seen the cattle to market. Dad had made it my job to keep the feeder full with the right mix. I’d seen them come in as scrawny yearlings and fatten up to 1,100 pounds apiece. **The price was right and it was time to sell. There was just the paperwork to complete.**

**“Got to have your John Hancock right here,”** said Mick, one of the drivers, as he handed Dad a clipboard.

**“What’s this, Mick?”** asked Dad.

**“Something that Uncle Sam wants you to sign. Says you kept the cattle off stilbéstrol for two weeks before the slaughter.”**

I felt the blood rush to my head. **Stilbéstrol was used as a feed additive to promote growth.** We’d debated its use and had gone ahead. The government had changed its regulations several times, and the form Mick had was new. **I’d been giving the cattle stilbéstrol all along.**

**“I don’t think it makes a whole lot of difference myself,”** said Mick. **“Don’t see how they can tell anyway.”**

Dad scratched the ground with his boot. We’d be the laughingstock of the county if we unloaded our cattle because of some silly government regulation. Another two weeks and the market price would be sure to fall.

Finally Dad looked up. **“Better unload ‘em,”** he said.

**That was 15 autumns ago and I’m a farmer myself now. Dad died a**

few years back. But his example lives on for me. That morning as the cattle came back down the chutes and the daylight stretched across the horizon, Dad didn't say anything. He didn't have to. Honesty wasn't just a value Dad talked about. It was something that he lived by.

- c. **George Barna** in his book **Revolutionary Parenting** states this, "A final condition for success that we discovered is that those who produce spiritual champions **embrace parenting as their primary job**. The nature of who their children will become assumes **such importance** that these parents recognize that **their career is a means to the end of raising progeny who please God**. Combined with the realization that effective parenting is conducted 'in the moment,' this means that **parenting is their full time job; the job they get paid to do is simply an addendum to the most important work they will do in life.**"

1. How important should one's family be to a follower of Jesus Christ?
  
2. In Genesis we see that the family was created long before the church was created. What could this tell us about God's view of the family?
  
3. In Deuteronomy 6:4-9, God's first instruction to parents is to love the Lord your God with all of your heart, mind and soul. That is what parents are to do "before" they parent their children. What does this say about the vital importance of parents walking with the Lord as they parent their children?
  
4. Do you believe the old adage that says: "More is caught than taught?" How does Deuteronomy 6:4-6 indicate the same philosophy regarding parenting?
  
5. What happens to the heart of a child when they see their "Christian parents" being inconsistent in their lives as Christians? What eventual harm can this do to a child's view of the Christian life?