



FAMILY FUTURE

Preaching and Teaching Resources

ADRIAN ROGERS





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Family Future

SERMON REFERENCE: Deuteronomy 5:29, 6:1-9

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #2130

The family was the first institution formed by God, created to meet the deepest physical, social, and spiritual needs of mankind. It is in the home that a child should learn who he is, what he can do and what is expected of him.

In the midst of this moral free fall, it is time we ask ourselves: what is the future of the family?

Adrian Rogers says, "If there is no future for our families, there is no future for this nation."

Deuteronomy 5:29 says, "Oh, that they had such a heart in them that they would fear Me and always keep all My commandments, that it might be well with them and with their children forever!"

Our homes are the universities of life.

In these homes, we must train our children to abide by God's law so that we can preserve the family's future. God gave the Ten Commandments to the family. God's priority plan for us is to pass our faith from parent to child.

Parents are the professors of their homes.

Deuteronomy 6:7 says, "You shall teach them diligently to your children..." Though we can't control our children, we can guide and teach them in the way they should go. Our primary goal as parents should be that we love God with sincere, selfless, and strong love so that we can set an example for our children to love Him, too.

The Ten Commandments are the curriculum.

These commandments are the liberating laws of life and the tracks upon which our families run. We are to set boundaries for our kids around the parameter of God's law.

Our children are our students.

It is not the church's responsibility to raise our children in faith, it is ours. "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." (Deuteronomy 6:8-9).

Finally, life is the laboratory.

Life is where these things are taught. We must teach our children convictionally, consistently, creatively, conversationally and conspicuously.

LIFE APPLICATION

Our homes are where our children learn everything they need to know about life. Have you established your home as a university, yourself as a professor, and God's law as the curriculum? Are your children your students, viewing life as the laboratory?



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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) The family is a little part of the Garden of Eden that we still have left.
 - i) God established the family in the Garden of Eden.
- b) The family had its origin in the heart and mind of Almighty God.
 - i) It was the first institution that God formed.
 - ii) It was put there to meet the deepest physical, social, spiritual and psychological needs of mankind.
- c) We need to understand the importance of the family.
 - i) Children get their own self-concept from the home.
 - (1) It is in the home that a child should learn who he is, what he can do, and what is expected of him.
 - (a) A child's psyche is formed by the family.
 - (2) A child needs to learn in the family a sense of security and confidence.
 - (3) A child needs to learn that he is so loved and worth something.
 - ii) A child gets his concept of life in the home.
 - (1) If there are limitations, disciplines and rules in the home, then the child learns that he is not a law unto himself.
 - (2) He learns that he has to live with other individuals and to respect authority.
 - (3) Proverbs 29:15
 - (4) Proverbs 23:13-14
 - (5) A child who doesn't learn to respect authority in the home will not respect authority in the school, in government, or God's authority.
 - iii) A child gets his concept of God in the home.
 - (1) If the home does not give that child love, mercy, grace and concern, then his concept of God may be warped.
 - d) The family is the basic unit of society.
 - i) Because of this, Satan (from the Garden of Eden to this day) has waged an all-out war on the family.
 - (1) There is a philosophical war against the family.
 - (a) People, with their minds, are working against the family.
 - (b) There are those who want to give members of the human family multiple genders to choose from instead of two.
 - (c) There are those who believe that homosexuality is the moral equivalent of heterosexuality.
 - (2) Many couples now live together without the benefit of marriage.
 - (a) The Bible clearly forbids this; it is against the law of God, and therefore, against the best welfare of the couple.



- (3) There is also an increased disregard for life.
 - (a) Families are made to protect life, but babies in their mothers' wombs are being treated today as non-persons.
- (4) The war against the family is compounded by America's easy divorce laws.
 - (a) We have many throw-away marriages today, and there is an accumulating body of evidence that shows that the family breakup devastates children in great numbers.
 - (i) Broken homes produce broken children which produce broken homes which produce broken children.
 - 1. But this cycle can be broken; there is hope.
- (5) Our nation is in a moral free-fall.
 - (a) Our standards are toppling.
 - (b) We have the vilest forms of pornography being displayed via the internet.
 - (i) This material is now available in the living rooms, classrooms and public libraries in America.
- (6) Our children are being educated in an educational system that says that we cannot speak of God in a positive way because of separation of church and state.
 - (a) The founding fathers believed in the separation of church and state if it meant that there would be no national denomination, but they did not believe in the separation of God and government.
 - (b) Leaders in our education system say that they will be neutral concerning God; they will not be for or against God.
 - (i) Yet, they teach evolution in our classrooms.
 - (c) Our children are being raised, by and large, in humanistic institutions where man, not God, is the center and circumference of everything.
- (7) This is compounded by the ignorance of many who call themselves Bible-believing Christians.
 - (a) Satan has tried to keep us in the dark and to give us the idea that we have to go along to get along.
- e) If there is no future for our families, then we can be certain that there will be no future for our nation.
- f) Deuteronomy 5:29
 - i) God gives us the Ten Commandments in these Scriptures:
 - (1) Exodus 20:1-17
 - (2) Deuteronomy 5:6-21
- g) Deuteronomy 6:1-9
 - i) This is what God says we are to do for the future of the family.
 - ii) Deuteronomy 6:4 is the Shema, one of the most important verses to Orthodox Jews.
 - (1) Shema means "hear."
 - (2) The first word in the verse is "hear."
- h) We are to train our children so that we as a nation can have a future and we as a family can have a future.



- 2) HOME IS THE UNIVERSITY OF LIFE (Deuteronomy 6:7)
 - a) God says that His commandments are to be taught in the home.
 - i) Deuteronomy 6:7
 - ii) God did not give the Ten Commandments to government, though government should abide by them.
 - iii) God did not give the Ten Commandments to industry, though industry should learn them.
 - iv) God did not give the Ten Commandments to education, though education should take note of them.
 - v) God gave the Ten Commandments to the family.
 - b) God's priority plan is that faith is to go from parent to child.
 - i) Our children are to see our faith in God in all that we do and in all that we say.
 - ii) The very atmosphere in which a child is raised is to be supercharged with godliness based on the Ten Commandments.
 - c) The family is the center and the core.

- 3) PARENTS ARE THE PROFESSORS IN THE UNIVERSITY (Deuteronomy 6:7)
 - a) A juvenile delinquent many times is a child trying to act like his parents.
 - b) The problem today is not primarily drop-out kids but drop-out parents.
 - i) Many parents have not done what they ought to do and have dropped their responsibilities.
 - c) There is a control center in every child that the parent cannot control; the child controls it, and God will not override it.
 - d) God will not force anyone to behave in a certain way.
 - i) He will enable us to do so, He will lead us to do so, He will love us to do so, but ultimately, we must decide.
 - ii) Therefore, one of the wisest things parents can learn is that they cannot make decisions for their children.
 - (1) Parents can make decisions for their children when they are little, but a child has to come to a place where he or she must make his or her own decisions.
 - iii) Never set goals for someone else because you cannot control them.
 - (1) Don't set goals for your children; have desires for your children.
 - (a) Desire that your children love God with all of their heart.
 - (b) Desire that your children live pure, clean, godly lives.
 - (c) Desire that they love father and mother, brother and sister.
 - (d) Desire that God will use them mightily.
 - (2) We set goals for ourselves.
 - (a) One of our goals should be to be a godly parent.
 - e) Deuteronomy 6:5
 - i) What are the qualifications if you would be a professor in this university?
 - (1) To love God with a sincere love.



- (a) Not a half-hearted love.
 - (b) Our children need to see in us a heartfelt burning, passionate, emotional and sincere love for the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - (i) Kids can spot a phony a mile away.
 - (c) Your kids know that you're not perfect, but they want to know that you're sincere.
 - (2) To love God with a selfless love.
 - (a) We're to love God with all of our soul.
 - (i) The soul is the self.
 - (b) Our whole self, 100%, needs to be given over to God.
 - (c) There are two books we can consult to see if we love God with all of our soul:
 - (i) Our checkbook.
 - (ii) Our date book or calendar.
 - 1. Where are we investing our time and money?
 - (d) Our kids need to see that there is no place in our lives that is off limits to God.
 - (i) This includes what we watch on television, what we read, etc.
 - (3) To love God with a strong love.
 - (a) With all of our might.
 - (b) This includes our physical strength, our emotional strength, financial strength and intellectual strength.
 - (c) Our kids need to see a sincere, selfless and strong love because we cannot teach what we do not know and do not practice.
 - ii) This is the passage that the Lord Jesus quoted when He was asked about the first and great commandment.
 - (1) Mark 12:29-30
- 4) THE TEN COMMANDMENTS ARE THE CURRICULUM (Deuteronomy 6:7)
- a) The Ten Commandments are not accidental or incidental, but fundamental.
 - b) The Ten Commandments are given primarily to the father.
 - i) The parents are to teach them to their children and grandchildren.
 - c) These commandments are iron-clad, but they are not cold and rigid restrictions.
 - i) They are the liberating laws of life.
 - ii) They are the tracks upon which a family is to run.
 - d) How many families have these commandments on the walls of their homes or in their children's bedrooms?
 - i) Deuteronomy 6:9
 - e) God has given us the Ten Commandments as the tracks to run on, and we will never have a successful family unless we set boundaries for our children.
 - i) It is not enough to say, "Because I said so."
 - ii) We need to be able to say, "Here's what God teaches; here's what God's Word says."
 - iii) If children do not have some boundaries and rules, then they will grow up with a sense of insecurity.
 - (1) It is normal and natural for them to push against these boundaries.



- (2) If the child pushes against the boundary and the boundary gives way, that child then loses his security.
 - (a) He will then let someone else set boundaries for him.
- iv) The Ten Commandments are the boundaries we should set for our children.
 - (1) Don't make yourself the issue.
 - (a) Simply say, "These are the laws by which our family operates; they are God's laws, not our laws."
 - (b) Don't make yourself the continual issue where they argue with you and get you to lower the standards.
- 5) CHILDREN ARE THE STUDENTS (Deuteronomy 6:7)
 - a) Since they are the students, children need to be enrolled early in the university of life.
 - b) Francis Xavier, a Roman Catholic leader, believed that a child's character is formed by the time he is seven years of age.
 - i) Children should be given to God before they are born.
 - c) The children are yours to raise.
 - i) It is not the church's responsibility to raise your children.
 - ii) It is not the Christian school's responsibility to raise your children.
- 6) LIFE IS THE LABORATORY (Deuteronomy 6:7-9)
 - a) Life itself is where these commandments are taught.
 - b) How are we to teach our children the Word of God?
 - i) We are to teach them convictionally.
 - (1) Deuteronomy 6:6
 - (2) The first thing we need to do as parents is to get our hearts right with God and let God's Word be in our hearts.
 - ii) We are to teach them consistently.
 - (1) Deuteronomy 6:7
 - (a) The word "diligently" means over and over again.
 - (2) Isaiah 28:10
 - (a) Every day we are to put truth upon truth upon truth, and there is a cumulative effect.
 - (3) We must be consistent.
 - iii) We are to teach them creatively.
 - (1) Deuteronomy 6:7
 - (2) There are so many ways to teach the Bible.
 - (a) Bible reading, stories, games, memorization, Christian books, songs, rewards for doing good, etc.
 - (i) A bribe is an inducement to do evil, but a reward is a recognition for doing right.
 - (ii) God gives rewards.
 - (iii) Reward your children for doing right.



- iv) We are to teach them conversationally.
 - (1) Deuteronomy 6:7
 - (a) Just talk of them.
 - (2) Deuteronomy 6:20-21
 - (a) There are many teachable opportunities in life.
 - (3) Teach them in that moment.
- v) We are to teach them conspicuously.
 - (1) Deuteronomy 6:8-9
 - (a) The Jews would place phylacteries on their forehead with the shema inside.
 - (b) Whatever we do is to be controlled by the Word of God.
 - (c) Whatever we think is to be controlled by the Word of God.
 - (2) In everything we do in life, it is to be conspicuous that our house is a house of God.
- c) Psalm 112:2
 - i) We need to pray not only for our children, but also for our grandchildren and great grandchildren and great-great grandchildren and future generations to come.

7) CONCLUSION

- a) God tells us in Deuteronomy 5 and 6 that there can be a future for the family.
 - i) It begins by putting your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.
- b) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
- c) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
 - i) Romans 3:23
 - ii) Romans 10:9-10
 - iii) Romans 10:13
 - iv) Acts 16:31
 - v) John 3:16



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Take your Bibles and turn to Deuteronomy chapter 5, and in a moment we're going to look at verse 29, but let me tell you about a funeral that took place some years ago. It was a very unusual funeral. The coffin was draped with the folds of Old Glory and the President of the United States of America was there at that funeral. He had his head bowed. The President's Cabinet was all there. There were dignitaries from the Congress and from the Senate. There were representatives from all over the world that had come to this funeral, and if you had been a stranger and walked up and had not seen the President you would have thought that perhaps it was the President himself whose funeral was being held. And you have to ask yourself whose body was in that casket because he'd never really sculptured a great piece of art. He had never written a great book. He certainly wasn't a war hero. He was a man who was in the Foreign Service and he had died in Tripoli, and they buried his body in Tripoli but by common command and consent they disinterred his body and brought it back to the United States for a very special funeral. They sent a United States Man of War to go pick up that body and to bring it back on that vessel, and when the Man of War came back to the United States there was a band playing to greet the arrival of that body, and great guns boomed in the air, and there was a parade and all of the flags in the United States hung at half-mast. This person, a very important person, was a man whose name you may know, or you may not know. It was John Howard Payne.

Now what had John Howard Payne done, and why were people so excited about this man, and why did they want to pay to John Howard Payne such honor? For one line that he had written; do you want to know what it is? "Mid pleasures and palaces, though oft I may roam, be it ever so humble, there's no place like home." That's what he wrote and that so touched the hearts of people around the world from that day to this day that we wanted to honor the man who wrote those words; "No place like home."

And I want to talk to you about home. I want to talk to you about the family because as I told you last week, the family is a little part of the Garden of Eden that we still have left because God established the family in the Garden of Eden, and it is the family that we, we look forward to in the Father's house through all eternity.

Now, anthropologists and sociologists would like to tell us that the family just somehow came out of the ooze and slime of evolution and out of the onward, gradual process of sociology and biology, but it is not so. The family had its origin in the heart and mind of Almighty God. It was the first institution that God formed, and it was put there to meet the deepest physical, social, spiritual, and physiological needs of mankind. And it is so important that we understand the importance of the family, because children should be born into the family and a child in a family, first of all, gets his own self-concept from the home. A little child born in a home, he has no self-concept. He doesn't know who he is or what he is. He has no real self-consciousness. It is in the home that a child should learn who he is, what he can do, and what is expected of him, and so a child's psyche is formed by



the family. The child needs to learn in the family the sense of security, a sense of confidence. He needs to learn that he is so loved that he is worth something. A child looks into its mother's face and the child sees in that mother that love, that love, and what that child sees when that child looks in its mother's face is, "I am special because my mother loves me so, my father loves me so." We often heard about the child who said he was an unwanted child, but by the time he was 19 he was wanted in seven states.

A child gets a concept of himself in the home. A child gets a concept of life in the home. In the home, if there are limitations and disciplines and rules, then the child learns that he's not a law unto himself. He learns that he has to live with other individuals. He has to learn to respect authority. And the Bible says in Proverbs 29 verse 15, "A child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame," and the Bible says in Proverbs 23 verse 13, "If we will discipline a child he'll not die, but we'll deliver his soul from hell." The child that doesn't learn to respect authority in the home is not going to respect authority in the school, in the government, he's not going to respect God's authority, and he may end up going to hell.

And then the child gets his concept of God in the home. God is spoken of as a Father, and if the home does not give to that child love, and mercy, and grace, and concern, the child's concept of God Himself may be warped. The family is the basic unit of society and because of that, Satan, from the Garden of Eden to this day, has waged an all-out war on the family. And there are some who are asking a question, seriously asking it; does the family have a future? I mean will the family as an institution continue to exist or will it be like the mastodon, will it be like the saber tooth tiger, will it be like the dinosaur, will it become extinct, will it become just a relic of another age?

Well, there is a war against the family and before I get into the main body of the message I just want to remind you that there is a philosophical war, listen, a philosophical war against the family. People with their minds are working against the family. Dr. James Dobson reported on the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women held in the late summer of 1995 in Beijing, China, and there was a conference and in that conference they discussed this "The deconstruction of gender." Now what on Earth is the deconstruction of gender? Well, let me tell you as they gave it. Quote, "The goal is to give members of the human family five genders from which to choose instead of two." No longer do we say male and female. Now you have five opportunities. "When freed from traditional bias," notice what they call it, traditional bias, "a person can decide to be male, female, homosexual, lesbian, or transgendered. Some may want to try all five in time. Homosexuality is considered the moral equivalent of heterosexuality. For women, however, the preferred love relationship is lesbian in nature. In that way male oppressiveness can be negated. Artificial insemination is the ideal method of producing a pregnancy, and a lesbian partner could have the same parenting rights accorded historically to the biological father." Now friend, that is a philosophical approach. In an international conference where people from nations of all over the world came to learn this kind of a thing. I tell you there is a war on the family.

And then on top of that we have in the United States, and other nations of the world, many who are living together without the benefit of a marriage ceremony. Now, to live together, to co-habit



was illegal throughout the country until about 1970. Millions of couples, according to the statistics, are living together without the benefit of marriage. So you see what is happening? Young people today are not even bothering to get married. They are living together, sort of try before you buy if we ever do get married. Young people, I want to tell you the Bible clearly forbids that. The Bible clearly forbids that. It is against the law of God and therefore, it is against your best welfare.

And then on top of that, I'm just talking about the war on the family. Not only is there this philosophical war, not only are there those who don't have to get married, but there is an increased disregard for life. Families are made to protect life, but precious babies today in their mother's wombs are being treated as non-persons and so many times are being disregarded and massacred for the comfort or the ease of the mother. January the 22nd, 1973, in my estimation, is the blackest day in American history, when 9 black-robed justices of the Supreme Court, the self-appointed high priests of humanism, said that little babies in their mother's womb are, unborn babies are non-persons.

Now leading in that is Planned Parenthood. I have absolutely, totally no respect for Planned Parenthood, none! Margaret Sanger who founded Planned Parenthood said, and I quote, "The most merciful thing the large family does to one of its infant members is to kill it." That's the founder of Planned Parenthood. And much of what is done to put to death the unborn in the womb is done with your tax money.

There's a war against the family, and the war against the family is compounded by the easy divorce laws in America. Today we have throw-away marriages and there is a accumulating body of evidence that shows that the family breakup devastates children in great numbers. There are physiological wounds that are given to children when the home breaks up that may never heal and may prohibit those children themselves unless those wounds are healed, from having a stable marriage themselves. Broken homes produce broken children, which produce broken homes which produce broken children. Thank God that cycle can be broken. I'm not here to say that there is no hope. I'm just saying that this kind of a thing has a devastating effect on children.

And then on top of all of that the nation itself, so called God-blessed America, is in a moral free fall right now as we talk. Old standards are toppling. And then on top of that, I'm talking about the war on the family. On top of that we have now the most vile kinds of pornography that is being displayed across America via the Internet. Dr. Richard Land said, "There is a subterranean electronic river of pornographic slime running under every city, town, village, and hamlet in America, grotesque and degenerate. Material is now available, not in the back alley of some so-called adult theater, but right in the living rooms, the classrooms, the public libraries of America."

Then on top of all of that, we have our children who are being educated in an educational system that says that we cannot speak of God in a positive way in the educational system because that somehow negates the idea of the separation of church and state. The founding fathers believed in the separation of church and state if it meant that there was to be no national denomination, but not for one breath did they ever believe in the separation of God and government, not at all! They say, "Well, we're going to be neutral, so we're not going to be for God, we're not going to be against God." Of course, they are not neutral because they teach Godless evolution. When you



talk to children and tell them there's a fairy tale about a frog that became a prince we say that's a fairy tale when we're talking in the nursery school, but in the classroom that's science when frogs become princes. They say, "Well, we're just going to be neutral about it." There are some things you can't be neutral about. Suppose we're just going say we're going to be neutral about food, so nobody's going to eat. You see, there're some things you are not neutral about. You can't be neutral about God, but our children are being raised, by and large, in humanistic institutions where man, not God, is the sum, the substance, the center, and the circumference of everything. I'm just talking about the war on the family.

And then that is compounded by the ignorance of so many of us who call ourselves Bible-believing Christians, and Satan has tried to keep us in darkness and to give us the idea that we have to go along to get along, and what I have already said today is very politically incorrect, I realize that. But I want to say to you, there are certain things that are non-negotiable. There are certain things that we need to learn if there's going to be a future for our family. And if there's no future for our families you can put it down big, plain, and straight there is no future for this nation.

Now, in Deuteronomy chapter 5 God gave the Ten Commandments. Actually Deuteronomy chapter 5 is a re-statement, a reinforcement of the Ten Commandments. And then after God gave these commandments God says in chapter 5 and verse 29 concerning His people, now listen to me, here's what God says, "Oh, that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear Me, and keep all My commandments always," now listen to this, "that it might be well with them and their children forever." God is saying, "If they will keep My commandments, there'll be a future for the family." That's what God is saying.

Now He has given the commandments and you know the commandments, they are there in Deuteronomy chapter 5 and Exodus 20, and then God, if you will go to chapter 6 and begin in verse 1 through verse 9, "Now these are the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments which the Lord your God commanded to teach you, that ye might do them in the land wither ye go to possess it. That thou mightest fear the Lord thy God, and keep all His statutes and His commandments," now watch this, "which I commanded thee, thou, and thy son, and thy son's son, all the days of thy life." What He's talking about here is a future for the family. "And that thy days may be prolonged. Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do it, that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase mightily, as the Lord God of thy fathers hath promised thee, in the land that floweth with milk and honey." And then He begins in verse 4 the Great Shema. This is perhaps the most important verse to Orthodox Jews, or the most important passage in all of the Bible. The word Shema means hear, and it begins with the word hear. "Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God is one Lord. And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart. And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon



thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.” Now here’s what God says we’re to do for the future of the family.

I want you to think now of how, therefore, we are to train our children so that we as a nation can have a future, so we as a family can have a future. Number one, first thing I want you to understand is home is the university of life, home is the university of life. God says that these commandments are to be taught in the home. God did not give the Ten Commandments to government, though government should abide by them; God did not give the Ten Commandments to industry, though industry should learn from them; God did not give the Ten Commandments to education, though education should take note of them. God gave the Ten Commandments to the family. Read all of this context. It is the family. This is God’s priority plan that faith is to go from parent to child. Our children are to see our faith in God in all that we do, in all that we say, and the very atmosphere in which a child is raised is to be supercharged with godliness based on the Ten Commandments. I want to tell you again that it is the family that is the center and the core and therefore the all-out war is against the family. So that’s the first thing I want you to learn is that home is to be the university of life, home is to be the university of life.

Now, here’s the second thing; parents are the professors in that university, parents are the professors. Look again if you will in Deuteronomy chapter 6 verse 7 and he says here, “And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children.” Do you know what a juvenile delinquent is so many times? He is a child trying to act like his parents. And we talk about drop-out kids today. I say that the problem is not primarily drop-out kids, it’s drop-out parents. It is shirker dads and slacker moms who have not done what they ought to do and have dropped their responsibilities.

Now, what are the qualifications if you would be a professor in this university? Well look if you will and see in Deuteronomy 6 verse 5. Here are the qualification, “And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.” Now, there are certain qualifications if you are to be a professor in this university. Now let me tell you something. There’s a control center in every child and you cannot control the control center; that child controls it. God will not override it. God is not going to force you or anybody else to behave in a certain way. God will enable you to do so. God will lead you to do so. God will love you to do so; but ultimately you must decide. Therefore, one of the wisest things that you can ever learn is that you cannot make decisions for your children. Oh, you can when they’re little. You can guide them, but a child has to come to a place where he or she must make his or her own decisions.

But you can make a decision for yourself. I’ve said this before and I want to say it again. Listen carefully, never set goals for somebody else. Never set goals for anybody else because you can’t control somebody else. Don’t set goals for your children. I don’t set goals for my children. I have desires for my children. Do you know what I desire for my children? That my children love God with all of their heart, that they live pure, clean, godly lives, that they love father and mother, they love brother and sister, that God will use them mightily. That is my desire, that is my heart’s prayer and desire to God for them. Yes, that is my desire, but I don’t have goals for my children. I have desires for my children. You know who I have a goal for? Adrian. I have desires for my children, I have a goal for



me. Do you know what my goal for me is? My desire is I'll have godly children. My goal is I will be a godly dad. I will be a godly dad! I've made up my mind that's what I'm going to do because you see I can choose for me. I choose Jesus. I choose God. I choose by the grace of God to be a godly dad and to love God with all of my heart.

Here is the qualification, look at it. Here's what you can choose to do in Deuteronomy 6 verse 5, "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." To love God with all your heart is a sincere love, not a half-hearted love. Our children need to see in us a heartfelt burning, passionate, emotional, and sincere love for the Lord Jesus Christ. And I'm going to tell you something about kids, they can spot a phony a mile away. Your kids know that you're not perfect, but they want to know that you're sincere, that you love God with all your heart.

Then you're to love God, not only with a sincere love, but with a selfless love, with all of your soul. The soul is the self. The whole self, 100% needs to be given over to God, not part time. And by the way, you want to know if you love God with all of your soul, two books you might consult: your checkbook and your calendar, your date book. Just look at those things, see where you're investing your time and your money. What really matters to you? Your kids need to see there is no place in your life that is marked off private; God stay out! That includes what you watch on television, what you read, and so forth.

Number three, you're to love God, not only with a sincere love, and not only with a selfless love, but you're to love Him with a strong love, with all of your might. Now, what does that include? It includes everything, all of your might. Your physical strength, your emotional strength, your financial strength, your intellectual strength. You're to love God with all of your might. And kids need to see if you are a professor in the university of life, they need to see a sincere, selfless, and strong love. Why? Because you cannot teach what you do not know and do not practice. Jesus, when somebody asked Him, "What is the first and great commandment?" Jesus quoted this, verse 5. That's what Jesus quoted.

Now here's a third thing I want you to see. Number one, remember that the home is the university of life! Number two the parents are the professors and I gave you the qualifications. Number three: the Ten Commandments are the curriculum, the Ten Commandments are the curriculum. Now in chapter 5 God gave the Ten Commandments, and then in chapter 6 He says, "Parents, you are to teach these." I wrote a book called Ten Secrets for a Successful Family and the ten secrets are an open secret, they are the Ten Commandments. I preached a message here to you people a series, A Perfect Ten for Homes that Win. That perfect ten are the Ten Commandments. They're not accidental, they're not incidental, they are fundamental. And again I tell you that the Ten Commandments are given primarily to the father and those who are to teach the Ten Commandments are parents who are to teach their children and their grandchildren. These commandments are iron-clad. They are rock-ribbed, but they are not cold, rigid restrictions. They are the liberating laws of life. They are the tracks upon which your family is to run.

Let me say something it's very hypocritical of many of us. I've known many evangelical Christians who are complaining and mouthing and carping that the Ten Commandments are no longer on the classroom walls of America's schools, and I think that's sad and I agree. But how many



of you have the Ten Commandments on the walls of your home? How many of you have those Ten Commandments, for example, in your children's bedroom or in the foyer of your house or somewhere where we can read these things. God said in Deuteronomy 6 verse 9 to these Jews, "You post these on the door posts of your house, the gates of your house, so people can see them as they come in and as they go out." God has given us the Ten Commandments as the tracks to run on and you're never going to have a successful family unless you set some boundaries for those kids. And friend, today in today's society, society is not enough for you to say, "Because I said so." You need to say, "Here's what God teaches, darling. Here's what the Word of God says."

And you need to set some boundaries. If your children don't have some boundaries, if they don't have some rules, if they don't have some restrictions, they're going to grow up with a sense of insecurity. You give them boundaries. Now, they're going to push against those boundaries. That is normal, that is natural and there's nothing wrong with that. It's just the instinct of life, they're going to push against those boundaries when you say, "Thou shalt and thou shalt not." This is what we do as a family and there are a lot of little subsets that come out of these Ten Commandments. For example, if you say, "Honor father and mother," and then there's some subsets that might say, "Son, you'll never sass your mother in my presence and get away with it." See, that's just a subset of honoring father and mother. But you just have those boundaries that are there.

If your child pushes against that boundary, and your child pushes against that and it gives and they can go right on through, do you know what happens to that child? From that moment on he loses his security. He says, "Well, in our world there really are no real laws, there are no boundaries." And you know what he'll do? He'll go right on through and he'll come over here and let somebody else set boundaries for him, somebody that you don't agree with. And he'll get in that situation and he'll get in some club, he'll get in some cult, he'll get in some organization that will set their own boundaries whatever they may be, and as weird and wild as they may be. Listen folks, we need to understand that there needs to be boundaries. The Ten Commandments are those boundaries.

Don't make yourself the issue. If you make yourself the issue, being a parent is going to be a twenty year ride through Ulcer Gulch. I mean don't let them argue with you and say, "Momma, can I please, daddy, can I please? No, I don't think so son." Just simply say, "Son, here are the laws which our family operates by. They are God's laws not our laws." You don't make yourself the issue. You don't have to keep putting on the black hat and white hat.

Have you ever been stopped by a highway patrolman? Okay, now, you've been stopped by that highway patrolman. If he's like the average highway patrolman, you know what he does? He gets out of the car, he walks up to you. He says, "Good afternoon," and he says, "May I see your license, please sir?" Your hands are trembling. You get the thing out. You can't find it. It was in there somewhere you know. And you get that out and you hand it over to him, and he says, "Mister Rogers, did you realize that you're doing 65 miles an hour in a 50 mile an hour zone?" "Well, no officer, I didn't realize that. I was thinking about my sermon." You know, I want him to know I'm a preacher you know. And he says, "Now, Mr. Rogers, you know you have broken one of our ordinances and I'm going to have to write you a ticket." And he's writing and so forth. And he says, "Now here you can pay this if you wish



or you can come into the court and have a nice day. So long." Hey, I don't have to get in an argument with him. He doesn't get in an argument with me. He is not the issue. The law is the issue. Do you see that? He doesn't make himself the issue.

I mean, listen folks, you don't have to continually have these battles with your kids once you get some boundaries. Once you say, "That it's not mom, it's not dad, we just have certain boundaries that we live by." And I'm telling you, you need to establish some boundaries, and if you don't establish those boundaries it's going to be a long, long, hard parenting that you're going to have. And don't make yourself the continual issue where they can move against you and argue with you and get you to lower the standards or whatever. Now, the Ten Commandments are the curriculum.

Next, children are the students, children are the students. Deuteronomy 6 verse 7 says, "You teach these thing to your children." And since they're the students, let me tell you they need to be enrolled early in the university of life. How early? Frances Xavier, a Roman Catholic leader, said, "You can give me the children until they are seven and anybody can have them from there on." What he meant is that the character is formed by the time they're seven. A woman asked her pastor said, "How old should my child be before I begin his spiritual training?" And the pastor said, "Well, how old is he now?" She said, "Five years old." He said, "You started five years too late." Actually, five years and nine months too late, in my estimation. Children should be given to God before they are born and the children are yours to raise. And, it's not the church's responsibility to raise your children. You say, "Well I send them down there to church," or, "I sent them off to a Christian school." Friend, they are your responsibility. We have to learn this.

Now, I, I thank God for our church, I thank God for our youth groups, but this church can't do it, and that Christian school can't do it, and there's nobody that you can pay to do it. It's your responsibility, and you need to enroll these kids early in the school of life. Now, the kids are the students.

All right. Now fifthly and finally: life is the laboratory, life is the laboratory. Look if you will now in Deuteronomy 6 verses 7 through 9, "And thou shalt teach them diligently unto they children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house." Do you get the idea that life itself is where these things are taught?

How are you to teach the Word of God? Well, number one, you are to teach them convictionally, convictionally. Deuteronomy 6 verse 6 says, "These words are to be in your heart." Now, if they're not in your heart then you're not going to be able to teach them. And so the very first thing you have to do dad, mom, is to get your heart right with God and let God's Word be in your heart. Teach them convictionally.

Number two: teach them consistently. Look in verse 7. God says, "And you'll teach them diligently." You know what the word diligently means? It means over and over again. Put in your margin Isaiah 28 verse 10, "For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line, here a little, there a little." Don't say, "Well, I've told them now, what's next?" No, every day you put truth upon truth upon truth and there is a cumulative effect. One of these days what



you've taught them is going to come back. As you put a little bit in the bank, every day, it's going to come back with compound interest. You've got to be consistent.

Now teach them, not only convictionally, consistently, but creatively. Notice in Deuteronomy 6 verse 7 he says, "And thou shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way," and so forth. There are so many ways to teach the Bible. A lot of times so-called family worship, and I believe in family worship, but it can be an ordeal. I'll tell you sometimes in our family when we had little children that's the time we lost our religion, trying to have family worship, till we learned how to do it creatively with Bible reading, and stories, and games, and memory, and Christian books, and songs and rewards for doing good. You say, "Well I don't believe in bribing kids." Oh, listen friend, a bribe is an inducement to do evil. A reward is a recognition for doing right. God gives rewards. Reward them for doing right and teach them these principles here.

Teach it creatively, teach it conversationally. Look in Deuteronomy 6 verse 7, "And thou shalt talk of them." Just talk of them. Go on down to verse 20 and look at verse 20, "And when thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, 'What mean the testimonies, and the statutes, and the judgments which the Lord our God hath commanded you?' Then you shall say to your son." There are so many teachable opportunities in life.

One night we were going to get something to eat afterwards and I had my little grandson Jonathan in the car with me. And I won't tell you what the teachable moment is, you don't need to know all of that, but I just felt that what we were doing, just in the distance from the car to the restaurant was such a teachable moment, and about something that was so very important. That was worth more to me than for him to sit through one of the sermons that I might have taught because I could share with this grandson who is so bright, brilliant, handsome, articulate, and will be one of the greatest men in the world. I could teach him in that moment. You teach them conversationally.

And then you teach them conspicuously. Deuteronomy 6 verses 8 and 9 say look, "Bind them on your hand, put them as frontlets between your eyes." What does that mean? Well, the Jews had phylacteries. With leather straps they would bind this Shema to their wrist and put them between the frontlets of their eyes, and there's nothing wrong with that, but I think God meant more than that. I think God meant whatever you do, speaking of the right hand, is to be controlled by the Word of God, whatever you think is to be controlled by the Word of God. Put them upon the doorposts of your house as you go out, as you come in! Everything you do all of life it is to be conspicuous that your house is a house of God!

If you come to our house you'll see a plaque on the left hand side of the door that mentions God, great and marvelous are thy works. If you come into our foyer you'll see the Scripture going all around the foyer. This house belongs to God. You go in our kitchen you'll see the Ten Commandments there on the walls of our kitchen. And we want our home to be a home, a house of prayer where the very presence of God is there.

Psalms 112 verse 2 says, "The generation of the upright shall be blessed. And his seed, his descendants, shall be mighty upon the Earth." Do you know what Joyce and I are praying? We're praying, not just for our children and our grandchildren. We're praying for our great grandchildren



and our great, great grandchildren. If the Lord delays, we're praying prayers with a delayed detonation. And that our seed, our descendants, will be mighty upon the Earth.

Is there a future for the family? I'll tell you God has told us in Deuteronomy 5 and 6 there can be a future for your family and you need to claim it.

Let's bow our heads in prayer. Heads are bowed and eyes are closed. While heads are bowed and eyes are closed, let me say that it begins by putting our faith in Jesus, loving God with a sincere, selfless, and strong love. And that love begins when we give our hearts to Christ as our personal Lord and Savior. Would you like to be saved? Would you like to know that every sin is forgiven? Would you like to have that burden rolled away? Would you like to take away the dread of the future and of death and have a hope that is steadfast and sure? Do you want a purpose for living and a hope for dying? Do you want power in your life? It all comes in the name of Jesus.

Would you pray a prayer like this? If you want to be saved right now, I want to help you to be saved and you can be saved this moment. Pray this prayer. Pray it out of your heart, "Dear God, I know that You love me and I know that You want to save me. Father, I need to be saved. I'm a sinner. My sin deserves judgment but I need and want mercy. Jesus, you paid for my sin with Your blood on the cross. Thank you for doing that. I'm ashamed of my sin, I'm sorry for my sin, I turn from my sin. Lord Jesus, right now, this moment, with all of my heart like a little child I trust You, I receive You into my life as my Lord and my Savior. I believe You're the Son of God. I believe You paid for my sin with your blood. I believe You were raised from the dead and I receive You now as my Lord and Master. Save me Jesus." Would you pray that prayer? Pray it simply and sincerely. "Save me Jesus." Right now where you are, just say, "Save me Jesus." You don't have to have an emotional ecstasy. It's not emotion, it's faith. Just trust Him. Say, "Save me Lord Jesus." Did you ask Him? Then thank Him for doing it. Say, "Thank You for doing it Jesus. That settles it because it is a gift and I receive it. I stand on Your Word. You cannot lie. You are my Lord and Savior. Thank you. Now Jesus, I'm so weak but You're so strong. Begin now to make me the person You want me to be and help me never to be ashamed of You. Give me the courage to make it public. In Your name I pray. Amen.



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