

Family Survival 101
The Privilege of Every Family
Deuteronomy 6

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Text Introduction: Deuteronomy means “second law.” The main purpose of Deuteronomy is to give the law to the generation that is now ready to enter the Promised Land.

Deuteronomy can be organized around Moses’ three farewell sermons: 1-4; 5-26; and 29-30. The emphasis of these sermons is to “follow the terms of this covenant, so that you may prosper in everything that you do.” (Deuteronomy 29:9) This is not a covenant just for them, but for all who follow after them. (Deuteronomy 29:15)

Our specific text for the next several weeks comes from Deuteronomy 6. Deuteronomy 6 is one of those texts that speak with such power in literally every verse. The background is this. Israel has been wandering around in the wilderness for 40 years. The time of wandering is coming to a close and God is preparing to lead them into the Promised Land. So, the background is one of covenant renewal. The renewal is for the entire nation. However, in the midst of this national context, the text reads in a most specific way to the family.

So, some of you are here today and are single and you want to say, “Oh boy, here we go. This has nothing to say to me.” It does. If you are concerned about the nation, your city, your culture, or your church, you will want to make sure that we get this right.

Text: ¹ “This is the command—the statutes and ordinances—the LORD your God has instructed [me] to teach you, so that you may follow [them] in the land you are about to enter and possess. ² [Do this] so that you may fear the LORD your God all the days of your life by keeping all His statutes and commands I am giving you, your son, and your grandson, and so that you may have a long life. ³ Listen, Israel, and be careful to follow [them], so that you may prosper and multiply greatly, because the LORD, the God of your fathers, has promised you a land flowing with milk and honey.

⁴ “Listen, Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is One. ⁵ Love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. ⁶ These words that I am giving you today are to be in your heart. ⁷ Repeat them to your children. Talk about them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. ⁸ Bind them as a sign on your hand and let them be a symbol on your forehead. ⁹ Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Introduction: Imagine the scene. This is a national sermon. These are instructions to the success and survival of the nation. At the same time, Moses turned the attention on the family. Now, of course, I certainly understand that there is much that is different about society then and now, but in considering the Bible, we are always looking to make application based on those principles that span all of time. I think the point is clear in this text.

God gave the task of discipleship to the family. As I said last week: “We, as well as most other churches I know, have tried to take over the God-given role of the family. If we are honest, we have to

draw two conclusions. We have failed. As a matter of fact, we have failed miserably. The other conclusion is central to why God gave the home this assignment of family discipleship. Even if the church had the best strategies, we don't have your children for enough hours in the week to give proper training.

Let me give you the entire sermon in a sentence this morning and then we will go back and talk about the individual parts.

High purpose calls for high priority because the price of failure is too high.

High Purpose

I hope that you will consider this task of family discipleship not as a chore, but as a high privilege with a high purpose.

Evidence: Let's just spend a moment looking at the proof here that this is the task that God gave to the family. Deuteronomy 4:9-10, 6:7-9, 6:20-21, 11:18-21, 31:12-13, 32:46

Implications: The church is certainly to be the partner, but the parents are to be the chief preachers and teachers in the home. If you have children, your greatest mission field is at your address.

The Psalmist in Psalm 127 calls children a "heritage from the Lord." What a wonderful privilege.

High Priority

So, that which is a task given exclusively to us must have a high priority. It is priority that we see in Deuteronomy 6. Let me encourage you to think on these things as you focus on the priority of making disciples at home.

- Plan—We generally get done what we really want to do. Nothing happens by accident. Planning is required.
- Protect—But even with planning, things get in the way, so we must protect.
- Persevere—Then, we have to persevere. This is not easy. Satan doesn't want this to be a priority, so we are going to have to persevere.

Back when Nick Saban was coaching for the Miami Dolphins, I remember reading of his refusal to accept a dinner invitation with President Bush. Saban was criticized, but he maintained, "Hey, it's not political, but I am a football coach and we have practice at the time I was asked to the dinner." I submit to you that this is the perspective of knowing what your priorities are and protecting them no matter what.

High Price

- Deuteronomy 8:19-20
- Judges 2:10
- Galatians 6:7

The stakes are high if we do not succeed.

What action will you begin to take this week?