

LIFE GROUPS

The Home – Deuteronomy 6:4-9

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

ICE BREAKER QUESTION: What would you say is the most important thing your mother or father ever taught you? How has it impacted your life?

Parents are integral to the Christian home and the raising up of the next generation of Christians. In many cases it's through the work of parents that God brings children to salvation. The calling on parents to be disciple makers is clear in Scripture. The Shema of Deuteronomy 6 was to be taught by parents in the home. God expected one generation of His people to teach the next.

Read back through the passage before going through the questions.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. What is your biggest takeaway? How was your experience with the Life Tool's this past week?**

- 2. Read Deuteronomy 6:4-9. Why do you think God told His people not just to love Him, but to love Him with all their hearts, souls, and strength? What was He trying to emphasize?**

We can't teach what we don't know ourselves. And we can't help our kids love God with everything they are unless we know what that means ourselves. So, God told His people to love Him, and then as they love Him, to teach the next generation to do the same.

“Can we expect the flames of our worship of God to burn brightly in public on the Lord’s Day when they barely flicker for Him in secret on other days?”

- Whitney, Donald. “Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life”

- a. **How have you seen your view of God and Scripture passed down to your own children or others within the next generation? How can we encourage our families and friends to love and serve God more fully?**

3. Look back at Deuteronomy 6:7-9. What is the truth God is calling us to teach in our homes and how are we supposed to teach these truths?

In verses 7-9, there are some teaching methods that might sound strange to us. We don’t usually bind God’s Word on our hands or put it as a symbol on our foreheads. The bigger principle here is one of consistency. That’s how we impress God’s commands on our children—it’s through consistently and regularly talking about them and living them out together as a family.

God wanted this faith teaching not only to be something that happens at a scheduled time; He wanted it to be ingrained in the culture of the family. These verses emphasize the regular and continuous effort at teaching the faith. This teaching happens when you get up, when you go to sleep, when you’re inside the house and outside of it.

“God deserves to be worshiped daily in our homes by our families”

- Whitney, Donald. “Worthy of Family Worship”, Article on Gospel Coalition

“Every Christian family ought to be as it were a little church”

- (*Works of Jonathan Edwards*, 25:484).

“How did Isaac know that they did not have everything necessary for a sacrifice? How did he know that the worship of God involved fire, wood, and a lamb? Or that the lamb would be sacrificed as a burnt offering? Isaac knew these things because he must have long been familiar with sacrifices and the worship of God.”

- Whitney, Donald. “Family Worship”, (24)

4. What are some everyday opportunities and ways that you can consistently talk about God's Word in your home this week?

"Every family is a beehive of busyness. Making the time — even ten minutes — for family worship is a challenge for everyone. And most families are tempted to think their schedule or circumstances are unique, at least when it comes to making family worship a regular priority. The truth is there's almost no barrier to family worship that has not been addressed by Christians for centuries. Where there's a desire for family worship — and some flexibility — there's almost always a way."

- Whitney, Donald. "Worthy of Family Worship", Article on Gospel Coalition

"In family worship, be brief, be regular, and be flexible."

- Whitney, Donald. "Family Worship", (75,76)

"Structured family worship seeks to daily encounter Christ by these means of grace— together"

- Helopoulos, Jason. "Worship With Your Family in 5, 15, or 30 Minutes", Article on Gospel Coalition.

- a. What about scheduled times? Is your schedule too crowded for things like a daily devotion time?**

5. Why is it important for parents to see their responsibility for their kids and at the same time help kids see they are responsible for their own choices? How can that happen?

Each of us, including our children, are ultimately responsible for our own actions. Parents are not responsible for the choices their children make; however they are responsible for modeling and teaching them what it means to live Christian lives. Proverbs 22:6 isn't a promise that children from Christian homes will never make bad choices; it describes, however, the way the family is meant to work. By following God's Word, we can raise children who avoid evil and serve God faithfully.

“Eighty-five percent of parents with children under age 13 believe they have primary responsibility for teaching their children about religious beliefs and spiritual matters. However, a majority of parents don’t spend any time during a typical week discussing religious matters or studying religious materials with their children. . . . Parents generally rely upon their church to do all of the religious training their children will receive.”

- Whitney, Donald. “Family Worship”, from Barna group (17)

6. Read Ephesians 6:1-4. What are some of the important ways godly parenting is different from worldly parenting? How can parents bring up their children in the training and instruction of the Lord?

As parents, we can’t shirk our responsibility. It is our job to raise our children in a godly way. We must actively do this; we can’t hope the church or the schools will take our place.

“Consistent, father-led family worship is one of the best, steadiest, and most easily measurable ways to bring up children in the Lord’s “discipline and instruction”

- Whitney, Donald. “Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life”

“An identity is more than just a behavior. It’s something you *are*. In a society of darkness that targets the hearts and minds of our children, our role as parents is to anchor them in the light of Christ. We must boldly contend for the truth by teaching our children that their identity is in Christ and his Word rather than within themselves. One way to do this is through a family worship culture.

This is a way of life in the home. It’s an identity that acknowledges God’s Word as the sole authority, making its study and discussion a central part of daily family life and cultivating an attitude of worship in family activities (Deut. 6:6–7). It involves creating a space where Christ is always in our conversation. While we know we can’t save our children, we can steep them in the Word where the Holy Spirit can awaken faith (Rom. 10:17). With this daily diligence and through God’s merciful grace, it’s our prayer that our children be wooed by the love of Christ, coming to identify themselves in union with him.”

- Hiser, Jodi. “Family Worship Culture”. Article on Gospel Coalition.

7. What does it look like for your home to be the place of spiritual growth if you don't have kids, just married, or not married?

"Empty nesters, Rather than grieving over what you should have done for your children in family worship years ago, begin family worship now and let that be an example not only of your continued growth as a Christian, but also of what your adult children can likewise begin to do."

- Whitney, Donald. "Family Worship", (100-101)

a. What is the responsibility of the church in the homes that don't have fathers?

And when those in our community are without fathers, the men of the church must be especially ready to exercise their leadership role.

b. What are some of the ways you are actively teaching your faith to the next generation?

8. What aspects of your daily life might need to change in order for you to truly lead your family to love the Lord in all areas of life and lead your home spiritually? What is your biggest struggle in leading spiritually in your home?

a. Are there any fears to leading spiritually or does it seem daunting to you?

Parents have two primary responsibilities: to model who Christ is and to mentor their children in regard to who Christ is.

"I don't think there's a mandate to be found in sacred Scripture that is more solemn than this one. That we are to teach our children the truth of God's Word is a sacred, holy responsibility that God gives to His people. And it's not something that is to be done only one day a week in Sunday school. We can't abdicate the responsibility to the church. The primary responsibility for the education of children according to Scripture is the family, the parents. And what is commanded is the passing on of tradition"

- Sproul, R.C.; "The Most Solemn Mandate". Article on Ligonier Ministries

9. How might focusing on the gospel help you overcome your greatest fears about leading your home spiritually, parenting, or mentoring others?

“Don’t expect immediate results. In fact, most nights it may seem that more family chaos occurs than family worship. That’s normal, even when you’re leading well. We’re raising families to be “oaks of righteousness” (Isaiah 61:3), and even in ideal conditions an oak develops very slowly and over a long time”

- Whitney, Don. “Worthy of Family Worship”, Article on Gospel Coalition

- a. **How can we better support each other as we seek to lead our home spiritually?**

PRAYER

Pray and thank God that He is the perfect Father. Pray that the parents in our church would embrace their responsibility to parent their children in a godly way. Also pray for any of the specific requests from the families in your group. Ask God to give each of us the grace we need to lead our families to love and serve Him and His church.

Thank God for our mothers and fathers and the legacy left behind for us. Pray that we would faithfully model for our children what it looks like to follow Christ passionately. For those who aren’t parents, pray that we would be faithful models and mentors to the people closest to us.



FURTHER STUDY

<https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/worthy-of-family-worship>

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/justin-taylor/an-interview-with-don-whitney-on-family-worship/>

<https://www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/how-do-i-teach-my-family>

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/11-reasons-to-worship-with-your-family/>

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/worship-family-minutes/>

<https://www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/most-solemn-mandate>