

# Teaching Our Children

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Date: 05 December 2021

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[0:00] verse 7. That's what you see as we read. So Deuteronomy 6, 1 to 7.

Now, this is the commandment, the statutes and the rules that the Lord your God commanded me to teach you, that you may do them in the land to which you're going over to possess it, that you may fear the Lord your God, you and your son, and your son, son, by keeping all his statutes and his commandments, which I command you all the days of your life, and that your days may be long. Hear, therefore, O Israel, and be careful to do them, that it may go well with you, that you may multiply greatly as the Lord, the God of your fathers, has promised you in a land flowing with milk and honey.

Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might.

And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.

[1:28] Teaching our children. We're going to look at this passage, particularly verse 7, as we read there just a second ago, and look at three aspects of what we see in regards to teaching our children, the teacher who teaches.

Who is it that teaches our children? And then the words that the teacher gives to our children, and in more detail, the teaching that's actually taught, or should be taught, to our children.

I pray that these words will be appropriate for us this morning, because in any service, any service where a child's been baptised, the sermon address normally, anyway, normally focuses on the family, the role of the family, and the importance of leading our little ones to the Lord Jesus as Saviour.

And of course, this sermon address is going to be no different. Of course, there's going to be a very poignant aspect to this service. The child who's going to be baptised daily, who's going to be baptised, baptised by her grandfather.

But, you know, in saying that, in saying that, the most important relationship that's going to be emphasised here isn't grandchild to grandfather.

[2:47] The most important relationship that any child can have is the relationship that he or she has with the Lord Jesus. His relationship, her relationship to the Saviour.

And all the promises, you see, the promises that baptism baptism is going to point forward to.

Because baptism is going to point forward to that guarantee that the water that's been put on the head of the child, that guarantee that that water shows, indicates, that whenever that child does give her life to the Lord Jesus, she has that absolute guarantee that she's safe eternally.

And you see, it's the whole aspect of relationships in the family. And not just the natural family, but the whole church family. That's what we want to emphasise based on this passage this morning.

Because this passage we read in Deuteronomy, it takes us back to the time of the Exodus. And Deuteronomy is a book that really is Moses' farewell address.

You might say one of the longest farewell addresses we've ever heard. But it's Moses' farewell to address to the Israelites after they'd been wandering for 40 years in the desert.

[4:06] And they're about to cross the Jordan. And they're about to enter the promised land, the land of Canaan. And Moses knows he's not going to accompany them. But his words are going to travel with the people when they cross over the Jordan.

The same words that have crossed over the centuries, the millennia. And they've crossed over so many different cultures, so many different languages, so many different countries, so many churches.

Words that have reached us even here today in our own gathering. And so we want to try and grasp what Moses was instructing the people here that has absolute relevance for us today.

And particularly in the context of a service where the child of a Christian family has been baptised.

And we know that in this day and age, this secular day and age, what's going to happen this morning is an ever-decreasing practice, the baptism of an infant.

So all of you, remember, you have a privilege here this morning that not many have in this day and age. You've got the privilege of being in this service witnessing the baptism of a child in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

[ 5 : 23 ] And you're here to worship God, the whole service, and to give thanks to Him even in this act of baptism that God has given to us to show forth the saving love of the Lord Jesus.

But what do we find then, and particularly in this passage, to help us, to draw our minds, our hearts, to what's going to happen in a moment in this service, the teacher who teaches.

I suppose we can say this, that it's, in so many ways, I've forgotten practice in so many cultures, the practice that we call oral tradition. But yet, that practice, it stood the test of time and through many, many centuries, the tradition of passing on information from one person to another by word of mouth.

Now, of course, in the days before people read, the days of a largely illiterate society, of course, that's how information was transmitted, word of mouth. Word being passed from one person to another and that information being retained by those who heard.

And of course, in the most important passing on of knowledge, information, knowledge that truly matters, God spoke. And God spoke to those who were the mediators between God and man.

[ 6 : 47 ] God breathed out his word and he breathed out that word to those who would convey that word to others and the people would retain that word, they'd remember that word and they'd listen to what God's mediators, God's prophets told the people.

God's prophets passing on God's word for the people to hear and to heed and to put into practice.

Now, wonderfully, absolutely wonderfully, that word was written down for posterity.

People like Moses writing down that word in the particular language that Moses spoke and wrote, the Hebrew language. But in the first instance, first instance, the passing on of that knowledge for man's greatest good was by word of mouth, by the mouth of God.

So in this passage here that we read off, here we're seeing Moses, the mediator between God and the Israelites. And he's telling the Israelites, telling the people about how God had first spoken to him.

God spoke to Moses, God spoke to him about the law the law that was summed up in the great commandment to love the one true God, to love God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.

[ 8 : 06 ] We'll come back to these words in a moment. And Moses was faithful to what God instructed him to do. God had placed him as the great teacher of the people.

And it was through Moses that God's lessons for life, the most important lessons for life were transmitted to the people to learn and to obey.

That's what we read in verse 1, Moses reminding the people that, you know, just as they're about to cross the River Jordan, just as they're about to enter the Promised Land, they've got to be faithful to what's most important in their lives, to love God with all that they are.

And so Moses here, he's teaching the people what truly matters. What truly matters is a relationship. I might say, the relationship, the relationship between the covenant Lord God and his people and applying that knowledge to obey God with all, all that they are.

And that truth hasn't changed through all the millennia because we have a greater teacher than Moses. In fact, the one who's described in the New Testament as teacher, the teacher who teaches you, the teacher who teaches me what truly matters.

[ 9 : 24 ] What truly matters is to have that saving relationship with Jesus by faith in him because Jesus taught the only way to heaven, the only way to eternal life is through a saving relationship with Jesus.

Now, the little children here this morning, people such as Ailey, who may well be and are too young to understand that particular truth. But the act of baptism surely points, surely involves the pointing, pointing to the one who truly and fully cleanses from sin.

And Ailey's going to have that sign on her, the sign of promise in her head that sign that points to the washing away of sin when she receives Jesus in faith and trusts in him as her saviour. Even now, I know that she's being taught these truths by her parents. She's being taught to love the Lord. And they're teaching her now, even as they're going to teach her many, many things as she grows up about what it means to love the Lord Jesus as her parents teach her and bring her up in the instruction and nurture of the Lord.

And so, you who love the Lord, you who've been taught these things of truth, it's for you to follow the Lord Jesus and teach others that Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life.

[10:56] Now, as a minister of a congregation, I am a teacher. We're all teachers who are ministers of the congregation. We're to teach what God has taught us. And of course, we're to practice, practice what we preach and practice what we teach.

But remember this, all who are Christ's, you are teachers. You are to teach the things of truth to those whom God has given your responsibility over.

Yes, of course, supremely in the home. But as we're going to see in a moment, it's got a much broader, a much wider, application than simply teaching our children in the nuclear family.

There's a whole aspect of the church family as we're going to look at in a moment. But before we look at that particular aspect, we're going to see what Moses taught the people, the words that Moses gave to the people, the teachers' words.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might. Moses himself, he'd been taught that great commandment from God.

[12:08] And Moses taught that commandment. He's teaching, even now in that time as he's giving the word to the people, as they're right up to that point, we might see in the very lip of the river Jordan.

But Moses is teaching them to abide by God's word, to keep that great commandment that we read there in verse 2. The keeping of that word, the word of God, that would ensure a consistent fear of the Lord, a consistent fear through the generations.

It's exactly the same commandment that Jesus told the religious leaders, in fact, one religious leader in particular, that leader who asked Jesus, what's the greatest commandment of all?

And Jesus had no hesitation in replying, you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind. This is the greatest and first commandment.

Because it sums up, you know, man's most important purpose in life, to love God with all that we are. And that love of God involves trusting in him, trusting in his word, following him, doing as he commands.

[13:24] The commands that Jesus said aren't burdensome. He said, my yoke is easy, my burden is light. And just as Moses, Moses the teacher of the Israelites taught this great commandment, that commandment that was to be passed on to others.

Well, that great commandment was taught by Jesus. the greatest teacher of all. And all who've known that command, that great command, it's for you to continue to pass that word on to others.

And to do so, even as we commit that word to the present generation, to future generations.

Because that's what comes into play here regarding teaching our children the teaching that's taught.

It's taught to our children. You shall teach them diligently to your children and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise.

So the first question is to be asked. Who does the teaching? Well, the answer's right there in the passage. It's you. You shall teach. You who have a heart for the welfare of our children.

[14:39] You will teach. You, in whose heart are the words of God. You teach. It's your heart's desire for, yes, the new generation, the young generation, and future generations to know Jesus as Lord.

You will teach. You might even say, there's a whole staff room of teachers across the churches, across the denominations. across the continents, across the world.

The staff room of teachers have been given that responsibility to teach our children to love God the Lord with all, all that they are. You know, too often we can reduce ourselves to what we might see as a small picture.

Rather than looking at the bigger picture, especially when it comes to teaching our children to love the Lord. Old Matthew Henry wrote this that really concerns this teaching.

He said this, teach them to your children, not only to those of your own body, but all those that are in any way under your care and tuition.

[15:50] Surely that means this. It means that our churches, our congregations, we have that high, high involvement, high responsibility to educate our children.

Sunday school, Bible class, youth fellowships, youth groups, parent and toddler groups. I'm just looking around the congregation this morning and I'd be very, very surprised if the vast majority here this morning hadn't been to a Sunday school or a youth fellowship or a youth group or a camp, a youth camp, church camp.

And there are the products of these works even here this morning. or elsewhere about organizations such as Scripture Union or campaigners, just to name but two, you know, where our young people have been instructed in the things of truth.

And so let's give thanks that these works continue and give thanks that we've got, still have, many freedoms in our own land for such organizations to work, to tell of the Lord Jesus Christ.

and let's pray that that work continues and it's not falling victim to those who'd seek to even take away the name of Jesus from our little ones' ears and hearts all in the name of secular progress.

[17:11] So let's pray for, pray for Ailey, pray for the little ones even here this morning. Pray that they'll be protected from those who would rather silence the name of Jesus rather than know that the name of Jesus has been taught to our children.

And yes, commit to God all who know, truly know God the Lord in their heart and who do love the Lord with all their heart and they'll know having known that blessing want to teach our children the same blessing.

Yes, there's that responsibility in the wider church context, the wider church family. But then of course there's the particular responsibility of parents, parents to their children, parents who love the Lord and who want to bring their little ones up to know the one true God and Savior.

I'm going back to old Matthew Henry again. He said these words. Bishop Patrick well observes here that Moses thought his law so very plain and easy that every father might be able to instruct his sons in it and every mother her daughters.

Now I'm certainly not suggesting that we have some kind of discrimination, gender discrimination in the family that only fathers teach their sons and only mothers teach their daughters. Absolutely not.

[18:32] But the ideal surely found even in Moses' words here. You who teach your children. Well, there's the ideal of course, the ideal of mother and father that's involved in nurturing and instructing your children in the Lord.

And even when that ideal isn't the case in the family. Certainly the believing parent has to teach her children. And it's the words that are borne out here by Moses.

You shall teach them diligently to your children. Diligently. It's a wonderful word. Diligently. We might call it the adverb of the heart. You know, from the heart teaching your children diligently with great care, with, you know, with all that you are, with that great emphasis.

Hard work, if you like. And that's why we read, you'll talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way, when you lie down, when you rise. In other words, every facet of your being and everything that you are in the home, how you relate one to another, how by your words, how by your example, by your hard work, if you like, being absolutely focused on your little ones to draw them to know the Lord Jesus as their saviour.

Diligence. You know, just think of generally, think of teaching generally. A good teacher is diligent. A good teacher. A good teacher's diligent.

[19:59] She wants her class to learn and she's going to be diligent in her preparation time and diligent in giving her best and teaching the children under her care, omitting no pupil, but bringing them all under her, if you like, her tutelage.

Going the second mile in that, still great vocation. But how much more than the teaching of our children to love the Lord their God with all their heart, all their soul, and all their might.

Because it's a whole-of-life teaching. Yes, it's for the sake of children present, but also for the sake of future generations. And for people such as myself and perhaps the autumn of my life and maybe for some of you in the autumn and even the winter of your lives, there'll be generations that I'll never see.

I'll never physically see anyway. But for still to be involved in the teaching of these future generations, there's that great task of even teaching the present generation and then following on

future generations, that they will know what truly matters.

I'll give one more Matthew Henning with this, I promise, this is the last one for the morning. Thus, that good thing which is committed to us, we must carefully transmit to those that come after us that it may be perpetuated.

[ 21 : 29 ] See, that's the diligence. That's what's involved in teaching our children about loving God, about loving Jesus. You see, when Moses was giving this farewell address to the Israelites, he wasn't just addressing the people that were right in front of him.

He was looking to the generations who'd succeed their fathers in the promised land. He was looking to the future. He was looking, you know, for the stability of the people of Israel so that they maintain their trust in the one true God and be protected from all the false gods of the pagan people around them.

Now, sadly, of course, from the future generations, many did succumb to the false gods of the pagan tribes. The teaching, the children to love the Lord, their God, with all their heart and soul and might.

For many, that was disregarded. And there were terrible consequences that followed. Punishment, exile. Whether millennia ago or whether in our own day and age, there has to be that awareness that what we teach our children and how we teach our children has enormous consequences, not just for their lives, not just for society at large, but for future generations.

Because a generation soon passes. And even now, you who have that responsibility to your children to teach them, well, you've got that responsibility to teach them by word and example to love the Lord.

[ 23 : 05 ] So don't neglect these times that God has given you to tell others, even your own children, to love the Lord. You can see even again in this building successive generations staring us in the eye.

But there's no time like the present to make the most of every opportunity with our children to teach them, to teach them of God, to show them by your words and example the Lord Jesus.

Pray for them and pray with them. Commit them to the Lord's keeping. As we said, Moses, when he's giving his farewell speech, he knew that his time on earth was short.

And so he used this opportunity that God gave him to teach the people the things of God. In Jesus' three-year ministry, he used the time that his father had given him to show others, to tell others that he is the way, the truth, and the life.

Of course, in Jesus' ministry, Jesus taught diligently and faithfully. He came to open the eyes of the spiritually blind to see him as Lord and Savior and to love God with all their heart.

[ 24 : 20 ] Of course, on the cross, even there, Jesus was teaching on the cross. He taught there and we might say in wordless speech, he taught that the only way to salvation was believing in him who died there on the cross, who took your place against the wrath of God.

So won't you teach your children, won't you teach them to love the Lord Jesus, to love the one who died for sinners, won't you tell them that the only way of salvation is through faith in the Lord Jesus? Or are you just going to keep silent and not teach our children what must be taught? Because if you're not teaching our children, others are going, others are going too. And they'll teach them not the things of truth, but things that point away from the Savior.

So listen one more time to the words of Moses, words that were given to him by inspiration of God. God teaching Moses to know him, to trust in him, and to pass that truth on to others.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. These words I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, and when you lie down and when you rise.

[ 25 : 47 ] Amen. Let us pray. Lord, you have taught us so much, even taught what we need to know through your word.

And may we be willing learners and as learners applying your word in every aspect of our lives. And Lord, may it be that here even this morning that the teaching of our children will be done faithfully and diligently.

So bless, we pray, every word given to our children that even our children will come to that saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus. Hear us, Lord, as we commit the remainder of this service to you now.

Bless us each one, we ask. We pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Now we're going to sing in Psalm 103, verse 8 to verse 14.

And during the singing, Ailey's going to come through. I'm just going to stand here while Ailey is here. I've just got a few more things to say before the act of baptism itself.

[ 26 : 58 ] Psalm 103, from verse 8 to 14. The tune is before the throne. The Lord is merciful and kind to anger, slow and full of grace.

Excuse me. He will not constantly reprove or in his anger hide his face. And then we'll sing in verse 13, Just as a father loves his child, so God loves those who fear his name.

And so on. Verse 8 to verse 14. To God's praise. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. On Asia, our wind's feet, our river sings their just reward, a great resolve as high as hell towards all those who fear the Lord.

Towards all those who fear the Lord. As far as he stood from the west, so far his blood hath poured away our many sins and trespasses, and all the guilt that God has laid.

[ 28 : 50 ] Just as a father of his child, so God loves those who fear his name.

For he remembers we are God, and well he knows our people fail.

And well he knows our people fail. Please be seated. I just want to say a few words about what's going to be happening in the act of baptism.

The first thing to say, it's a command. It's a command. It's a command that Jesus gave. We read in Matthew 28, And Jesus came and said to them, All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. And then again the word teaching, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.

[ 30 : 06 ] So Jesus giving this command to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. I just want to emphasize about baptism, the sign, the sign of baptism.

The sign that points to the person who's been baptized, being a member of the church of the Lord Jesus. That sign of the washing with water. The sign of cleansing from sin that enables a person to be a disciple of Jesus.

When you witness the baptism of Ailey, it's going to happen just in a few moments. There's that sign that's going to be placed in her head, the sign, the cleansing from sin.

It's not going to make Ailey a Christian, but it's going to point to the power of Jesus to cleanse her from sin, when by God's grace she commits her life to the Lord Jesus.

And that sign's going to be given in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. In other words, she'll be claimed for God. But there's something else that baptism involves.

[ 31 : 17 ] It's not just the sign, but there's a promise, a pledge, that God will cleanse from sin when Ailey puts her trust in him. So there's that promise that tells that God is faithful and that there's that guarantee of her salvation when she gives her life to the Lord Jesus.

That promise is going to be in her head as we are going to do just for this moment. So I'm just going to come down and I'm going to ask the congregation to stand at this point.

I'm going to ask Catherine Gareth, first of all, some questions or vows. Catherine Gareth, do you acknowledge the Bible to be the Word of God and your only guide in all matters of faith and conduct?

Do you confess God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit as revealed in Scripture to be your God? Do you profess faith in Jesus Christ as the only Savior of sinners and as your Savior and Lord?

Do you promise independence in God's promised help by your prayers, teaching example to bring up your children in the instruction and discipline of the Lord?

[ 32 : 36 ] Ailey Janus Morrison, I baptise you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face to shine upon you and keep you safe. Amen. Please be seated.

Please be seated. Let's pray. Lord, bless Ailey. Bless her. Go before her.

Be near her. Bless Catherine Garris. That's the parent her. Bless Rory, Lord. Bless the family in front here this morning.

May they know that you watch over them and are with them and are near them. Bless them, Lord, we pray. And all the families gathered here this morning, bless them, we ask.

[ 33 : 38 ] In Jesus' name. Amen. So a few words to say to you. I say so many things to you and I've said it over the years, but remember the vows that you've taken.

They're not just words to speak in front of a congregation for the sake of it. You have promised by your word and example to lead Ailey, to guide Ailey, to show Ailey the Lord Jesus.

You've made that commitment. I know that you will do as your vows declared before, yes, before this congregation and before God.

And to the congregation, don't give up on our church.