

3 WAYS TO PASS DOWN SCRIPTURE TO YOUR CHILDREN.

TODAY'S CHILDREN ARE BOMBARDED WITH INFORMATION, UNLIKE ANY PREVIOUS GENERATION. THE AMOUNT OF MEDIA AN AVERAGE 12-YEAR OLD CONSUMES DAILY CAN BE OVERWHELMING FOR PARENTS TO REALIZE OR EVEN UNDERSTAND FULLY. AS EVENTS CONTINUE TO UNFOLD IN 2020, THIS OVERSATURATION OF HEADLINES AND MESSAGES WILL ONLY INCREASE.

AS A PARENT, YOU MAY ALSO STRUGGLE TO PROCESS EVERYTHING YOU SEE AND HEAR EACH DAY. THANKFULLY, THE LORD KNEW TIMES OF DIFFICULTY AND UNCERTAINTY WOULD COME FOR EVERY GENERATION. HE'S NEITHER SURPRISED BY WHAT HAPPENS NOR UNPREPARED TO MEET YOU WHERE YOU ARE. THIS IS WHY WE HAVE THE WORD OF GOD AND THE SPIRIT OF GOD TO HELP US WALK WISELY.

AS BELIEVERS, THE KEY IS KNOWING HOW TO USE SCRIPTURE TO NAVIGATE THE WORLD IN WHICH WE LIVE.



IN THE HOME

Before God commissioned the church, He created the family. God's design for marriage and family was to draw man closer to Him and display His glory to the world.

Perhaps your childhood involved such an experience. Your parents were the first to read you God's Word and lead you to follow Jesus. Maybe your home didn't operate that way, but despite the challenges, you desire to begin a Christian legacy by "train(ing) up a child in the way he should go, (so that) even when he is old he will not depart from it." (Proverbs 22:6, ESV)



HOW EXACTLY DO WE DO THAT?

In a world where children have continual sources of communication and connection, how do we ensure that they have similar access to the Word of God in a way that transforms their lives? In the sixth chapter of Deuteronomy, we read the commands that the LORD shares with Israel before entering the Promised Land.

This passage is known as the Shema, which translates to "hear" in Hebrew. By hearing and repeating this teaching every day, each generation of Israelites was commissioned to worship the one true God. This was Israel's confession of faith to remind them WHO God is and WHAT He's called them to do.

DEUTERONOMY 6:1-9 (NIV)

"THESE ARE THE COMMANDS, DECREES, AND LAWS THE LORD YOUR GOD DIRECTED ME TO TEACH YOU TO OBSERVE IN THE LAND THAT YOU ARE CROSSING THE JORDAN TO POSSESS, 2 SO THAT YOU, YOUR CHILDREN AND THEIR CHILDREN AFTER THEM MAY FEAR THE LORD YOUR GOD AS LONG AS YOU LIVE BY KEEPING ALL HIS DECREES AND COMMANDS THAT I GIVE YOU, AND SO THAT YOU MAY ENJOY LONG LIFE. 3 HEAR, ISRAEL, AND BE CAREFUL TO OBEY SO THAT IT MAY GO WELL WITH YOU AND THAT YOU MAY INCREASE GREATLY IN A LAND FLOWING WITH MILK AND HONEY, JUST AS THE LORD, THE GOD OF YOUR ANCESTORS, PROMISED YOU. 4 HEAR, O ISRAEL: THE LORD OUR GOD, THE LORD IS ONE. 5 LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH. 6 THESE COMMANDMENTS THAT I GIVE YOU TODAY ARE TO BE ON YOUR HEARTS. 7 IMPRESS THEM ON YOUR CHILDREN. TALK ABOUT THEM WHEN YOU SIT AT HOME AND WHEN YOU WALK ALONG THE ROAD, WHEN YOU LIE DOWN AND WHEN YOU GET UP. 8 TIE THEM AS SYMBOLS ON YOUR HANDS AND BIND THEM ON YOUR FOREHEADS. 9 WRITE THEM ON THE DOORFRAMES OF YOUR HOUSES AND ON YOUR GATES."

Knowing the LORD alone is God, households were commanded to pass down the truth of His Word to their children, and their children's children. In verses seven thru nine, He tells them HOW to do it. Here are 3 ways to pass down Scriptures to your children.

SAY

"IMPRESS THEM ON YOUR CHILDREN. TALK ABOUT THEM WHEN YOU SIT AT HOME AND WHEN YOU WALK ALONG THE ROAD, WHEN YOU LIE DOWN AND WHEN YOU GET UP." (DEUTERONOMY 6:7)

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT? Reading the Word is good, but discussing it with your children is great! That's how hearing becomes understanding. The Lord created the home so that the next generation would know how God worked during their parents' lifetimes, and also understand the importance His Word plays in their daily lives.

Avoid treating the Bible like a dictionary to only pull out when you're stumped. Instead, use it like a daily roadmap that provides timely insight for every journey you take.

HOW CAN I DO THIS WITH MY CHILD? This doesn't just happen at church or in the car to and from worship. Listen carefully to the questions your child is asking and note the events happening all around you. What Scripture passages or people come to mind? Bringing eternal Truth into daily chats at home makes the Bible come alive for our children.

SHOW

"TIE THEM AS SYMBOLS ON YOUR HANDS AND BIND THEM ON YOUR FOREHEADS." (DEUTERONOMY 6:8)

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT? As parents, let's not underestimate the power of everything our children see. Remember all those messages they process every day? Make every effort to SHOW them His Word in ways that ensure those messages are filtered through a heart and mind that is filled with the Gospel. Seeing the Word and giving it prominent places in our daily lives can have powerful effects.

HOW CAN I DO THIS WITH MY CHILD? In the physical sense, some have shirts, bracelets, and home decorations that contain Bible verses and teachings as a reflection of their beliefs and a reminder of who they follow.

Another way way is to channel their creativity for ways to display the Word that might provide timely reminders or inspire healthy discussions. For instance, writing an encouraging note on the bathroom mirror with a dry erase marker, having a designated prayer closet to write out prayers, God's answers, display scripture, and more. What areas of your home or daily paths could you fill with the Good News?

SHARE

"WRITE THEM ON THE DOORFRAMES OF YOUR HOUSES AND ON YOUR GATES." (DEUTERONOMY 6:9)

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT? Good News is worth sharing. What God did for you He wants to do for others. In the verse above, God calls His people to display His Word so that others see and bear witness to His glory. God wants to use what you have to share the Good News with those around you. He doesn't want you to keep it inside your walls. He wants it to be seen throughout your neighborhood and community.

HOW CAN I DO THIS WITH MY CHILD? Consider ways to show and share the Good News around your house and neighborhood. You can do it verbally by engaging in conversations about your life and journey. There are also other ways to show it with your actions. Over the summer, I've seen sidewalks covered in Scripture and encouraging messages. People have put up Christmas lights and held scavenger hunts in their neighborhoods to help connect with neighbors in more meaningful ways.

Jesus said, "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house." (Matthew 5:14-15, NIV) Ask your child for ways your family can shine where God has placed you and you will impact the world by being faithful to where God has placed you.

REMEMBER

Don't miss the key to all of this found in Deuteronomy 6:5-6: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts."

We cannot pass down anything that isn't first in us as parents. Our desire to lead our children in the Truth must come primarily from a genuine love of the Lord with all your heart, soul, and strength. If we aren't reading, believing, and praying the Word of God, we will fail to share it with our children. A healthy question to ask ourselves is: Is there a difference between what my kids see in me versus what they hear from me?

In 2018, Barna released a study that found three out of five engaged Christian parents say that they are primarily responsible for developing their teen's faith (59%). One third said that it's mostly them, with the help of church leaders (36%).

If engaged Christian parents need to be reminded of their primary role in the development of their child's faith, our churches must continue to equip and encourage families to do just that!

NEXT STEP



