

**Deuteronomy 6:4-15** <sup>4</sup> "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD *is* one! <sup>5</sup> "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. <sup>6</sup> "And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. <sup>7</sup> "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 up. <sup>8</sup> "You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. <sup>9</sup> "You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. <sup>10</sup> "So it shall be, when the LORD your God brings you into the land of which He swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give you large and beautiful cities which you did not build, <sup>11</sup> "houses full of all good things, which you did not fill, hewn-out wells which you did not dig, vineyards and olive trees which you did not plant-- when you have eaten and are full-- <sup>12</sup> "*then* beware, lest you forget the LORD who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage. <sup>13</sup> "You shall fear the LORD your God and serve Him, and shall take oaths in His name. <sup>14</sup> "You shall not go after other gods, the gods of the peoples who *are* all around you <sup>15</sup> `(for the LORD your God *is* a jealous God among you), lest the anger of the LORD your God be aroused against you and destroy you from the face of the earth.

<sup>4</sup> "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD *is* one!

As we look forward to and dedicate another new school year to the Lord, we look back on the reason and the foundation and the purpose and the goal for which we built this school and for which we still strive.

The Lord your God is one – One God, one faith, one people, one goal, one purpose, one hope. We heard these same words from the Apostle Paul. Two thousand years after they were announced to the people of Israel there were still a people who strived to “hear the Lord your God.” There were still a people who were striving for that one same goal. Now two thousand years later again here we are still striving for the same goal and the same hope.

<sup>5</sup> "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.

That first word we translate “heart” but really it means everything inside you, quite literally, your heart, your mind, your gut, your bones. Let them all be dedicated to the love of the Lord

Secondly your soul or you life, let your entire life be dedicated to the Lord.

Your strength or all your energy expend every bit of you have to serving the Lord.

**<sup>7</sup> "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 up. <sup>8</sup> "You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. <sup>9</sup> "You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.**

Now what is the number one most important thing you have to do in order to dedicate your life and heart to the Lord? More important than coming to church, more important than evangelism, the first thing the Lord says is "teach your children."

If you really love the Lord, if you whole life is dedicate to him and His kingdom, if you serve Him the way we just heard and the way that we pray every Sunday that we might serve him, then certainly you will teach your children to do the same. Those among you who love fishing do you neglect to teach your sons how to fish, or duck hunting, or deer hunting, or music, or pigs? Whatever it is you love, do you not teach your children about that thing?

Therefore if you love the Lord most certainly **you** will teach your children about the Lord and his word.

To whom does the Lord give this command that we should teach our children the love of the Lord? Does he give it to pastors and/or teachers? No. The command is giving to Father's as the head of the household. Father's are never mentioned here in this verse, but it is implied by the use of the masculine 3<sup>rd</sup> person, and it is stated very blatantly later by Paul, "**Fathers train up your children in the fear and admonition of the Lord.**"

This responsibility is above all laid on the parent, first the Father but then also the mother. And it is the parents that will have to answer to the Lord if they do not teach their children the word of the Lord. We have many examples of father's who did not teach their children and the Lord's punishment on them: Eli, David, Solomon – just to name a few.

The role of the Pastor and the teacher is to help you to fulfill the job God has given to you. Not to do it for you. This doesn't mean you have to home school. But it does mean you have to be aware and involved in your child's education. This is true of all subjects but especially it is true of catechism and other religion classes.

Verse 7 says "teach them diligently" actually verse seven in Hebrew says, "repeat it over and over and over again." Make them talk to you about what they learned at school. Make them repeat back to you. Go over their homework with them to make sure they have done it well. Repeat the lessons they learned that day and burn it into their brains so that they will not easily forget it.

As I said this is true for all subjects but especially confirmation class. They need to learn memory work. Memory work must be reviewed daily so that it can be etched into your brain for good. If they simply jam it in Friday morning they might know it well enough to say it on Friday but they will soon forget. Two years later when they must recite it in front of the congregation they will not know it. Yet most kids will do that if you let them. This is why the parents must be involved. Go over their memory work with them.

Even before they come to confirmation class teach them the catechism. Teach them the bible stories. That was the original purpose of the catechism to be a poster on the wall and every day the father and his children could talk about and work on it a little more.

We don't have time for that! This is the complaint of many. Yet notice the wisdom of our God: He doesn't say make sure you set aside one hour a day to just do this, but instead "as you sit, as you walk, as you lie, as you rise up" in other words as you are doing your normal activities. When you pick them up from school and drive them home, when you sit down to eat dinner, while you are out walking. Whatever it is you are doing, while you are doing it discuss these things with your children.

Why should we do this?

**<sup>10</sup> "So it shall be, when the LORD your God brings you into the land of which He swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give you large and beautiful cities which you did not build, <sup>11</sup> "houses full of all good things, which you did not fill, hewn-out wells which you did not dig, vineyards and olive trees which you did not plant-- when you have eaten and are full- - <sup>12</sup> "then beware, lest you forget the LORD who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.**

Because look at all the Lord has done for us. We want our children to know from whom we have received all these things and continue in them.

We might not have been brought up from Egypt but we have been given much that we never worked for. Even if you worked all your life still you have received opportunities that many other have not.

The Lord has given us these things, we want our children to know where they came from and more importantly love the Lord who gave us such gifts. As we have been discussing in Ephesians the multitude of blessings the Lord has poured out upon His people.

**<sup>13</sup> "You shall fear the LORD your God and serve Him,**

We ought to fear God as a child fears his father when he knows that he has done wrong. I always think of the Calvin and Hobbes comic strip in connection with this passage. When he broke his father's binoculars Calvin was afraid of his parents then with a great fear, because he knew that what he had done was very very wrong. And yet the love of his father and ours is greater. So yes we ought to fear for the great wrong that we have done but nevertheless we do not run away from the Father. Instead knowing what terrible things we have done we throw ourselves on his mercy, and indeed the love of the Father is greater and redeems us from all our sins.

**Amen**