

JRAM New Westminster 6-15-14

Intro:

Thanks for invitation and Privilege to speak

*Happy Father's Day

I've been asked to speak about Fathers

Fathers are awesome – desperately needed in our society today

Fathers downplayed somewhat in our culture

Lack of good fathers causing tremendous social problems

Children need a good father

Disclaimers:

Mothers & children

Not ignoring Mothers or children or non-fathers

Mothers are awesome as well, but you already had mother's day

What I'm saying is applicable to everyone

I'm not Father – have no kids

I can't tell great stories and personal insights

I'm not an expert on fatherhood, not even close

Therefore I am very qualified to talk to fathers, because all I have to tell you is what the Bible has to tell you about Fatherhood

What God has to say is better than what any human father knows

*Announce Deut. 6:1-9

Context

Right after restatement of 10 commands

Stresses the importance of listening to God and obeying what He says

Looking forward to life in the land

All of Deut. Loving instruction how to find blessing and avoid disaster

God has already rescued you – no need to earn His favor

But how to get the most out of the relationship you already have & not mess it up

Read Deut 6:1-9

PRAY!!!!!!!!!!

3 main sections of this passage

*1. God's purpose for all these commands and the promise He makes to His people in verses 1-3

*2 The Command to love and prize God above everything else in verses 4-5

*3 The command to pass this on to the next generations in verses 6-9

*1-3 God's Purpose and promise for all these commands

Reread verses

Setup for the rest of the passage – will just skim and point out a few things

Summarizing much of Deuteronomy both before and after this passage

*This is the command which the Lord commanded

*To teach them in order to do them in the land

*To fear the Lord and keep His commands

We need more sense of God's awesome holiness and majesty

The Fear of the Lord is still a great thing

Obedience is a necessity, not an option

Cf. 5:29 Oh that they had such a heart as this always, to fear me

and to keep all my commandments,

*Commanding multiple generations

God sees long view

Some things in your life, God may be doing for the sake of your great grandkids

*Goal of Obedience is the promise of blessing

It will go well with you and your children

Divine generosity, not prosperity gospel

Cf. 5:29, ...that it might go well with them and with their descendants forever!

Cf. 5:33 You shall walk in all the way that the LORD your God has commanded you, that you may live, and that it may go well with you, and that you may live long in the land that you shall possess.

*4-5 Great Shema - Prizing God above all else

Reread verses

*Importance - Possibly the most important verses in the entire OT

Difficult to underestimate how important these two verses are

*Restatement of first 2 commandments

I am the LORD your God, Have no God's before me

Make no idols (to represent me or compete with me for your affections)

*Motto of OT Israel

John 3:16 of Israel

"Fundamental truth of Israel's religion" summary of OT

Part of daily prayers, recited 2 times a day by orthodox Jews in that day and ours

Memorized and absolutely familiar

*Jesus used to sum up all Law

Not inventing something new and profound, but reminding them what is central

Back to basics, back to first love

Who or what we serve as God determines everything else about our life

2nd greatest command depends on the first

Never be able to rightly love your neighbor until you rightly love God

More important for today, you'll never be able to love your wife and kids until you rightly love God

*Meaning

*Hear! - shema

Marking importance – cf. other places in Deut.

Shades into implications of understand and obey - hear with attention

*God is the ONLY God - possible different translations

monotheism

Their day - against polytheism and idolatry

Our day - against multiple things that vie for our attention and loyalty and love - idolatry

God allows no rivals - jealous God

1st of 10 commandments - no other gods

*God is OUR God

Personal relationship - on God's initiative and track record

They love because He first loved and rescued them from Egypt and promised blessing

*Response

*Love with everything

*Heart

Inner self, seat of feelings, emotions, inclination, will, reason, mind, affections etc.

Broad range of meanings of this word

Often when it is used in the Bible you can tell from the context more specifically what part of our inner person this word refers to

In this passage there is nothing to help us choose whether this means our emotions or our mind or our will

Rather, it uses the word all to tell us not to choose which parts to love God with, as if we can love God with our mind, but not our emotions,

*Soul/mind

Our personhood and personality, including feelings and perceptions, desires, passions, emotions, much overlap with term for heart

Jesus needs to add a fourth word in the language of the NT to cover all that these words mean

*Muchness/strength

Power, force, abundance, activity

Hebrew word for 'very'

Application

Not divide these three terms, but rather together they signal that we should love the Lord our God with all that we are,

Nothing left out, because there is only One God

Remember the context

Connected to hearing God's words with obedience

Connected with having no other gods before Him -

1 God allows no divided loyalty

No other god to share with

Loving Christ more than father & mother & sister & brother

(honor father & mother)

Be a better father and husband if love God more

My problems are always that I love myself or something else more than God

I turn the things around me into idols and serve them, and it always ends badly

Whenever I am sane, I look to God for all my delight and help and strength, and I find that He is worthy of that kind of devotion and is more than I thought I wanted

When I prize God over everything else, it is wonderful

When I prize other things over God, it crashes

Is it just me? - Let's delight in our God more than anything else

*6-9 passing on to next generation

Reread verses

*These words are to be on your heart – v. 6

Which words?

Hear O Israel, Love God with everything

As well as the more detailed instructions on how to carry that out

Lit. “They will be on your heart” – both as promise and command

*Internalized

memorized,

second nature

part of who we are

Psa. 119:11 – I have hidden your Word in my heart, so that I might not sin
against you

*We live inside out

What we love on our insides automatically determines what we do on the
outside

Jesus talked about whatever we have stored up in our hearts, this is what
we will automatically bring out

We all know the difference between giving lip service to something,
knowing and saying all the right things, but not really meaning them,
and really internalizing and meaning the words, which is demonstrated
by our actions

We know what it means to really take something to heart – that is what
God wants

Illustrate with kid saying he will clean his room

This is the promise of the New Covenant in Jer. 31:33

“I will put my law in their minds, and write it on their hearts.

I will be their God, and they will be my people.”

*Recite and speak them to your children – v. 7

*Repeat, recite again and again, to inculcate

Not a one time thing

Teaching is like boxing quote

Bible talks a lot about Parents training children rightly

Eph. 6:4 - Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord

Prov. 22:6 - Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.

Contrast Jdg. 2:10-11 - After that whole generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation grew up, who knew neither the LORD nor what he had done for Israel. 11 Then the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the LORD

Nothing is more important to pass on to your children than God

More than inheritance

More than secret family recipe

More than paying for college education

More important that teaching them where babies come from

*In every part of life

- against compartmentalization - practical atheism the other 6 days

God's Words are "to permeate every sphere of human live" WBC

*At every place

When you dwell in your home

When you walk on the road - wherever you are

*At every time

When you lie down to sleep

When you wake up - hendiadys all day long

If secular school and TV teach your kids 6 days a week and Sunday School 1 day a week, who will win?

Parents need to take the lead in training their kids in godliness and life in general.

John Flavel – “If you neglect to instruct them in the way of holiness, will the devil neglect to instruct them in the way of wickedness?”

BTW Children, listen to your parents when they try to protect you from the garbage in the world, what you put into your brain determines who you are

Jesus said the eye is the lamp of the body, if the eye is bad, the whole person is bad

So remember your parents aren't trying to spoil your fun, but they're trying to love you

*Model as well as teach

”They will be on your heart closely tied to “recite and speak”

*They will be the central focus of your life – vv. 8-9

Tied on your hands and between your eyes

To be a sign

Phylacteries and arm bands- taken literally by orthodox Jews

Sign as a reminder of a duty, memorial - cf. wedding ring

Figure of devotion and perpetual remembrance

Like a post it note or writing a permanent note on your hand

Like a smudge on my glasses – I can’t help but notice it all the time – it effects everything I see and do

And posted on your doorpost

Show to be the fundamental principle of the household

And posted on your gates (city)

Place of public meeting and discussion, decision and judgment, civic center

Bible is not meant to be put on a shelf in a closet somewhere and gather dust while we fill our minds with something else –

it is to be the primary food for our soul

Application

God has put these things together in the same passage on purpose

Point of this sermon is to help you see the close context and connection between:

*Who God is (the ONLY TRUE GOD) –

*The command to love God with everything –

*The necessity to put these things on your heart –

*The necessity to pass this on you your children –

*And the inability to do so unless they are the central focus of your own life

Who God is, and the fact that He is the only God, and the wonderful God that He is, just makes it a no-brainer necessity to love Him with everything

We can’t love God with everything if this is not a reality deep in our hearts at the core of our being

We cannot help but have this impact the people closest to us

We cannot fake it, you're raising children who are too smart to be fooled

What we do speaks louder than what we say

The family that prays together stays together, family devotions

*Our Children will be like us –

point is clear, intentional, unbreakable connection

What we focus on, we magnify

What we revere, we become like – Psa. 135:15-20 The idols of the nations are silver and gold, made by the hands of men. 16 They have mouths, but cannot speak, eyes, but they cannot see; 17 they have ears, but cannot hear, nor is there breath in their mouths. 18 Those who make them will be like them, and so will all who trust in them. 19 O house of Israel, praise the LORD; O house of Aaron, praise the LORD; 20 O house of Levi, praise the LORD; you who fear him, praise the LORD.

What we focus on, our children focus on

What we revere, our children revere

What we become, our children imitate

*Illustration of Jonathan Edwards and Max Juke

Jonathan Edwards was a famous preacher and a godly man

Max Juke was a nonbeliever and a scoundrel

There were famous studies done to trace their descendants

Here are the results of these studies

1394 descendants of Jonathan Edwards:

13 college presidents

65 college professors

30 judges

100 lawyers

60 medical doctors

75 military officers

300 pastors

60 prominent authors

3 US Senators

80 Governors and ambassadors

1 Vice president of the US

903 descendants of Max Juke:

310 never finished high school and died in poverty

145 confirmed alcoholics

190 public prostitutes

285 had sexually transmitted diseases

150 spent time in prison, including 7 murderers

There is a connection between loving God, having these things on our heart and the destiny of our children

Please see the necessity/weight/responsibility of being a father

See the necessity/weight/responsibility of being, not faking being one who Loves God with all

*Gospel promise

I have done a cruel thing - setting up an impossibly high standard
It is possible that there are fathers here who are feeling pretty bad because they don't perfectly measure up to this

There may be some who despair of their ability to do any better
BTW wives and children don't help by making them feel worse
I certainly don't live up to this all the time
What are we going to do?

I won't take back the high standard, because it is God's Word
Rather, I will tell you the good news of Jesus

We Need Jesus – for everything, especially a high calling such as fatherhood

Jesus does not look down on fathers who fail – but He does not lower the standard

Jesus does not ask fathers to get better on their own strength

Jesus does not let fathers remain as they are when they need to get better

Jesus goes to the Cross to take all the sins, failures and shortcomings of fathers and the rest of us

Jesus raises from the dead to bring a new kind of life to all who believe in Him and rely on Him

Jesus sends His Spirit to be with us and change our hearts into hearts that love God with more and more and eventually He will change our hearts into those that love God with all

Jesus gives us a church, surrounding us with people to help us and teach us and encourage us to love God with all that we are

If you need help being a better father, a better person, Look to Jesus and look around to brothers and sisters

Let your fatherhood be impacted by God's Fatherhood in Jesus

Let your Love of God be impacted by God's love of us in Christ –

I Jn 4:10 “This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.”

Our love and obedience is only possible in response to God's love and faithfulness and grace

Just as the command to love God in Deuteronomy is based on God's rescue in the Exodus

So the command to us is based on God's rescue of us at the cross and resurrection of Christ

Rom 5:8 – “God is demonstrating His own love for us in this: While we were still sinner, Christ died for us.”

God is not waiting for you to get your act together, but calling you to Him, and He will change you

Therefore Look at Jesus - what we revere, we become

Be intentional to look to Jesus

The more we see Jesus, the more we realize how lovable He really is, and the more we love Him with all that we are

Be intentional to model and train children to look to Jesus

And the benefit will be tangible in your children and all around

Phil 3:13-14 - Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. 13 Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. 15 All of us who are mature should take such a view of things. And if on some point you think differently, that too God will make clear to you.

2 Cor 3:16-18 - And we, who with unveiled faces all look intently into the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

PRAY

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