

Talking Relationally, Participating Creatively: Deut 6:1-9

Sunday, October 15, 2023
Covenant Church
Pastor Zack Phillips

Deuteronomy 6:1-9

¹ Now this is the commandment—the statutes and the ordinances—that the LORD your God charged me to teach you to observe in the land that you are about to cross into and occupy, ² so that you and your children and your children’s children may fear the LORD your God all the days of your life, and keep all his decrees and his commandments that I am commanding you, so that your days may be long. ³ Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe them diligently, so that it may go well with you, and so that you may multiply greatly in a land flowing with milk and honey, as the LORD, the God of your ancestors, has promised you.

⁴ Hear, O Israel: The LORD is our God, the LORD alone. ⁵ You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. ⁶ Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. ⁷ Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise. ⁸ Bind them as a sign on your hand, fix them as an emblem on your forehead, ⁹ and write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

A. Introduction

Parents report that “technology/ social media” is the #1 thing that “makes it more difficult to raise kids today.”¹

- Children 8-10 spend about 6 hrs/day in front of a screen using entertainment media
- Children 11-14 spend about 9 hrs/day in front of a screen using entertainment media
- Children 15-18 spend about 7.5 hrs/day in front of a screen using entertainment media²

B. Relationally and Constantly

The importance of intergenerational friendships:³

¹ Data from Barna, reported in Andy Crouch, *The Tech-Wise Family: Everyday Steps for Putting Technology in Its Proper Place* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2017).

² Estimates from Centers for Disease Control, Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity, available at <https://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao/multimedia/infographics/getmoving.html>. Similar are the figures from the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry: 4-6 hr/day for ages 8-12 and “up to 9 hr”/day for teens. See https://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Families_and_Youth/Facts_for_Families/FFF-Guide/Children-And-Watching-TV-054.aspx. Also similar are the figures from the non-profit Common Sense Media: 4h, 44m for ages 8-12 and 7h 22m for teens; note that these figures do *not* include “time spent using screens for school or homework.” See <https://www.commonsensemedia.org/research/the-common-sense-census-media-use-by-tweens-and-teens-2019>.

³ Data presented in David Kinnaman & Mark Matlock, *Faith For Exiles: 5 Ways for a New Generation to Follow Jesus in Digital Babylon* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2019): 113, 133, 139. Percentage is “percentage who strongly agree with each statement.”

	Prodigals	Nomads	Habitual Churchgoers	Resilient Disciples
I am connected to a community of Christians	7%	7%	33%	82%
When growing up, I had close personal friends who were adults from my church, parish, or faith community	27%	31%	53%	77%
Connected with those older than me [at church]	20%	16%	31%	65%
I feel valued by the people in my life who are older than me	24%	26%	37%	65%
I often look to those who are older than me for advice when I need to make difficult decisions	21%	25%	37%	56%
I have had an adult mentor at church other than the pastor or church staff	7%	8%	17%	39%

We can't overstate the importance of these relationships with adults outside the family, especially as children move through their teen years. There are some things kids simply won't be able to hear from or work through with their parents. High-quality, Jesus-seeking adults in their lives can help keep them involved in church, be people they want to be around, and provide them with examples they can emulate.⁴

C. "Talking"

Deut 6:20–25 ²⁰ When your children ask you in time to come, "What is the meaning of the decrees and the statutes and the ordinances that the LORD our God has commanded you?" ²¹ then you shall say to your children, "We were Pharaoh's slaves in Egypt, but the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand. ²² The LORD displayed before our eyes great and awesome signs and wonders against Egypt, against Pharaoh and all his household. ²³ He brought us out from there in order to bring us in, to give us the land that he promised on oath to our ancestors. ²⁴ Then the LORD commanded us to observe all these statutes, to fear the LORD our God, for our lasting good, so as to keep us alive, as is now the case. ²⁵ If we diligently observe this entire commandment before the LORD our God, as he has commanded us, we will be in the right."

D. Participating Creatively

Question: What is one thing that God may have said to you through this sermon?

Some Recommended Reading

Andy Crouch, *The Tech-Wise Family: Everyday Steps for Putting Technology in Its Proper Place* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2017)

David Kinnaman & Mark Matlock, *Faith For Exiles: 5 Ways for a New Generation to Follow Jesus in Digital Babylon* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2019)

David Kinnaman, *You Lost Me: Why Young Christians Are Leaving Church... and Rethinking Faith* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2011)

⁴ Kinnaman & Matlock, *Faith For Exiles*, 139.