

## FOLLOW: LESSON FOUR (Leaders Guide)

### Leading my family and friends spiritually

#### **BIBLE CONVERSATION (40 minutes)**

*Read Deut. 6:4-9*

- 1) Try to describe in a single phrase what this passage says devotion to God looks like. What are some words from the text that you would highlight?**
- 2) Why do you think God emphasized personal devotion (vs. 4-6) before he commands us to teach others? In other words, why is it so important to start with our own heart (vs. 6)?**

We cannot impart what we do not possess. You cannot take someone where you haven't been. The very first step in being a spiritual leader is to care for your own soul. You may ask the follow up question, **what things do you do to fan into flame a love for God and his word?** You can consider this letter from Hudson Taylor, Missionary to China.

The point is this: I saw more clearly than ever that the first great and primary business to which I ought to attend every day was to have my soul happy in the Lord. The first thing to be concerned about was not how much I might serve the Lord, how I might glorify the Lord; but how I might get my soul into a happy state, and how my inner man might be nourished . . . Before this time my practice had been at least for ten years previously as a habitual thing to give myself to prayer after having dressed in the morning. Now I saw that the most important thing I had to do was to give myself to the reading of the word of God and to meditation on it, that thus my heart might be comforted, encouraged, warned, reprov'd, instructed; and that thus, while meditating, my heart might be brought into experimental communion with the Lord. I began, therefore, to meditate on the New Testament from the beginning early in the morning. The first thing I did, after having asked in a few words the Lord's blessing upon his precious word, was to begin to meditate on the word of God, searching as it were into every verse to get blessing out of it; not for the sake of the public ministry of the word; not for the sake of preaching on what I had meditated upon; but for the sake of obtaining food for my soul. The result I have found to be almost invariably this, that after a very few minutes my soul has been led to confession, or to thanksgiving, or to intercession, or to supplication; so that though I did not, as it were, give myself to prayer but to meditation, yet it

turned almost immediately more or less into prayer.

**3) Tell about a friend or family member that modeled repentance, faith in Jesus, and a genuine love for God. What affect did that person have on your life?**

Think about why faith is so important to see lived out. We need godly examples. “Do as I say and not as I do” does not work when leading others spiritually (our spouse, our kids, or our friends). Thinking about how you have seen others lead spiritually can help you understand how to do the same.

- Perhaps it was a parent who, in their discipline, got angry and had to apologize to you. This helps show the you, mom and dad aren’t perfect. Parents can model that they are saved by Jesus’ work on the cross not their perfect parenting.
- Maybe it was a friend or parent who showed you what it looked like to take everything to God in prayer.
- Maybe it was a friend who turned every day opportunities with their children into gospel conversations – discussions about God as creator, redeemer, connected life to a story in the Bible, etc.

**4) Reread vs. 7. Do you find yourself regularly having conversations that bring up the gospel or God’s word? Look at the four times for conversation in vs. 7 (dinner time, drive time, bed time, breakfast time) and give one activity that could transform that time into a gospel talking time for you and your kids, your spouse, or a friend.**

This is a time to dream about how your group members could use regular times in the day as times to have a gospel conversation. This might be with a friend, your spouse, or your child.

Have your group think of one of these 4 times (A time of the day, a particular meal, some daily travel, work or chore time) and add an activity (something you’d like to do more often) like:

- Praying with your children
- Bible/story reading
- Bible study and discussion
- Talking/reading/learning about Jesus

- Encouraging with the gospel and the blessings included in salvation (adoption, justification, the promises of God, heaven, etc.)
- Worshipping as a family
- Sharing your own sin/struggle with a friend or family member. Describing your repentance/progress in Christ.
- A way to care for others in Jesus' name
- Your person spiritual life/ testimony
- Some other teaching type activity that you would like to do.

**5) Read ahead to verses 10-12. What is this passage about? As Christians, how do we avoid “forgetting the Lord” and forgetting the way Jesus has freed us from our slavery of sin (through the gospel)? How can the gospel be assumed (last paragraph in article) in our friendships and in our families?**

The gospel is the message that we are loved, accepted, adopted into God's family only by faith in Jesus' life, death, and resurrection on our behalf. This is the message you believed when you first became a Christian. However, in our Christian journey we have a tendency to drift away from the fact that we were once a slave to sin who has been adopted into God's family. And we subtly start thinking that we are doing well on our own. We forget about the Lord and move on to religious duty. Before long, we're no longer putting our confidence in Christ, we have made false God's – we have begun performing and pretending not relying on God's grace for all of life.

The Hebrew people needed to remember that even after life gets good and comfortable that they haven't earned what they have. Its all been a gift of God's grace. The same goes for us who have not earned our favored status (beloved, son, daughter) but it was given to us through Christ and by grace alone.

Many churches and families throughout America are in the processes of assuming the gospel. And assuming the gospel (according to this study in intro paragraph) means the next generation will forget the gospel. If it wasn't central for mom and dad, its not that important for me either. This is tragic, but by God's grace, we have the opportunity to change the next generation.

See verses 20-22 also.

**6) [Parent Exercise] Read Psalm 127 together and discuss the main point of the passage. Then do the gospel-centered parent exercise on the next page. Circle the description from each column that describes you best. Finally, share with someone how God is challenging you to center your life on your identity in Christ and not yourself or your child. (*this can be a take home assignment*)**