

Sermon Notes

Practical Lessons for Understanding the Word of God



False Doctrine

KEY PASSAGE: Deuteronomy 6, 7 | SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE: 1 Timothy 6:20 | 2 Peter 3:17-18 | 2 John 10

SUMMARY

Our children live in a culture filled with spiritual dangers.

The philosophies of atheism, agnosticism, and various other false teachings threaten to lead our kids into error and unbelief, while rampant moral corruption pressures them to succumb to sinful practices. With so much stacked against them, there's a great need for the influence of godly fathers who love the Lord and know His Word. When the Israelites were about to cross into the Promised Land, they were entering an ungodly, immoral culture. God entrusted the fathers with the responsibility of teaching their children His commands and ways. By fully establishing them in the truth, these faithful dads were protecting them from the deceptions and temptations that would soon surround them.

In some ways, the cultural dangers our children face are even more threatening than those the Israelites encountered. The Hebrews lived as a separate people, never intermingling with the pagan nations they dispossessed. But today, Christians live within the culture. Many of our children attend public schools and universities that openly promote ungodly philosophies. Even some seminaries have compromised their stance on biblical truth to instruct worldly teachings.

SERMON POINTS

Since our children must deal with so many temptations and false philosophies, it's essential that we teach them the doctrinal truths of Scripture.

Children must know what they believe in order to recognize error and defend truth. Our kids

need conviction and courage, not cowardice and compromise. Furthermore, their beliefs will determine how they behave.

Basic definitions of belief systems:

- **Doctrine:** A body of teaching used as a standard of orthodoxy. The Christian faith stands upon some basic and essential teachings of the Bible regarding various subjects. For example, we have doctrines concerning Christ, the Holy Spirit, judgment, heaven, and hell, to name a few. These are truths we need to understand in order to defend the faith.
- **False doctrine:** A belief that does not match the Word of God. Obviously, we must know what the Bible says before we can recognize when a teaching contradicts it. Some examples of false doctrines are that Jesus was not born of a virgin or that God is not the Creator.
- **Heresy:** A deliberate denial of revealed truth from God's Word accompanied with acceptance of error and a self-willed opinion in opposition to biblical truth. Those who teach heresy are determined to convince others to accept their belief system, despite what the Bible teaches.

When Moses explained how fathers were to teach God's Word to their children, he gave several examples of when to do it—while sitting, walking, lying down at bedtime, and rising up in the morning—basically, throughout the day while doing normal activities (Deut. 6:7). Talking about the Lord and His Word should be as common in our homes as discussing sports or any other favorite topic. A wise parent knows how to shift any dinnertime conversation into an opportunity for a spiritual lesson.

Although the Lord gives fathers the primary responsibility for teaching the Scriptures to their children, mothers also play an important role. In fact,

many women have stepped in to train their children when the father is absent or uninterested in spiritual matters. However, Christian husbands should never abdicate their God-given responsibility just because their wives have a better understanding of the Scriptures.

Parents cannot afford to deny or ignore the sinful state of our society. The world is filled with sexual attractions, drugs, and ungodly music that could lure our children away. Cult groups offer unconditional acceptance and permissive lifestyles, which appeal to the desires of the flesh. Our children will either fall for all the lies and become victims, or they will stand firm for what they believe and become victors.

We need to courageously stand for our convictions and defend our beliefs in a world that holds opposing views. This means we can't waffle on the issue of the absolute truth of the Bible. When we live by its teachings, we are protected from the false doctrines that could destroy us. As parents, we are called to set an example for our children by grounding ourselves in the Scriptures and protecting our minds from the negative influence of ungodly music and television. Since our children watch and imitate us, anytime we compromise on the standard of God's Word, our families are weakened.

It's time to get serious about reading and studying the Bible, learning to defend our faith, and living a godly life. We really only have two options. We either walk in truth or on the pathway of error.

The path of false doctrine:

This pathway is full of signs that clearly tell us we're going the wrong direction.

- **Deception:** False teachings and cults make promises they can't keep.
- **Division:** When family members accept false beliefs, it causes many types of conflict and separation in the home.
- **Disillusionment:** Followers of false teachers are eventually disappointed when their leader's self-serving motives are discovered.

- **Danger:** Teachings that promote moral permissiveness attract those who want the freedom to do what they want. The effect of immoral lifestyles, however, endangers the future of all of our children.

- **Destruction:** The result of false doctrine is destruction for both the family and society.

What we can do to help:

Our cultural problems seem overwhelming and beyond our ability to remedy. However, we can follow the apostle Paul's example. He was a single Jewish man who brought the message of Christ to the Gentiles living like pagans. He had the courage, will, and love for his fellow man to do whatever necessary to bring the truth of the gospel to them. Today we live in the most threatened generation in the world, but through the use of technological communication, we also have the greatest potential for reaching every person with the message of Jesus Christ.

In the face of widespread false doctrine, we can personally take steps to protect ourselves and our families from being led astray.

RESPONSE

- Are you studying the Word of God each day? We each need to discover exactly what God wants us to believe and commit to live by it.
- Do you refute false doctrine when you see it? We are advised in 2 Peter 3:17-18 to be on guard against error and "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."
- Have you separated yourself from false doctrine? We should never listen to false teachers or waste our time trying to convince them of the truth if they're unwilling to listen (2 John 10).

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