

## **Week Three - Mobilize the Next Generation of World Changers**

### **Deuteronomy 6:4-9**

#### **Spend FIFTEEN - Day One**

1. Last week, we discovered God's priority for seeking and saving the lost. God also has a priority for how He wants His community of believers to act. Read Deuteronomy 6.
2. What significant event happened in the chapter directly before this one (Deuteronomy 5)?
3. With that context in mind, what is the main emphasis of God's instructions to His people in Deuteronomy 6? (For help answering this, look for the repeated phrase in verses 1, 2, 6, 17, 24, 25.)
4. What do you think this would look like for our community of believers today? What specific things should we be doing?
5. There also seems to be an important corollary to keeping God's commands, a secondary thing that we must do as well, in order to be faithful. What is it? (See verses 2, 7, 20)
6. Why do you think these two things are connected, in God's eyes?
7. End your FIFTEEN in prayer. Ask God to help you write his commands on your heart (v.6).

#### **Spend FIFTEEN - Day Two**

8. Deuteronomy 6 makes a connection between God's people following His commands and God's people making sure that the next generation (children and grandchildren) also know the commands. Let's explore more of why that might be in Judges 2:6-13.
9. How faithful were the people of God under the leadership of Joshua and his generation?
10. What went wrong? In other words, what problem led to the downfall of the next generation?
11. Think back on your own faith development. What started you on your path toward following God? Who had an impact by telling you who God is and what He has done?
12. How well are you able to tell the next generation about who God is and what He has done in your life (v.10)?

13. What opportunities have you had to talk to kids and grandkids (either your own or other people's)? Of what opportunities might you avail yourself?
14. Finish you FIFTEEN by thanking God for the people who made sure that you had the opportunity (either as a child or a new believer) to learn about Him and get to know Him.

**Spend FIFTEEN - Day Three**

15. When did you come to faith? How old were you? What were the circumstances that led to you being a believer? How about your friends and family? For those who are believers, when did they come to faith?
16. If you have any friends and family who are adults now and do not believe in God, how would you rate the likelihood of their conversion?
17. An article at Christianity Today's website confirms that 85% of believers in American evangelical churches came to faith before the age of 18 ([christianitytoday.com/pastors/2010/summer/outsidiersfindfaith.html](http://christianitytoday.com/pastors/2010/summer/outsidiersfindfaith.html)). What implications does that have for the way Christians try to pass on their faith to those around them?
18. Barna, a Christian research group, has even more startling conclusions about this data: "Families, churches and parachurch ministries must recognize that the primary window of opportunity for effectively reaching people with the good news of Jesus' death and resurrection is during the pre-teen years. It is during those years that people develop their frames of reference for the remainder of their life – especially theologically and morally. Consistently explaining and modeling truth principles for young people is the most critical factor in their spiritual development." ([barna.com/research/evangelism-is-most-effective-among-kids/](http://barna.com/research/evangelism-is-most-effective-among-kids/)) Now turn to Deuteronomy 6 and briefly skim the chapter. How does knowing about these studies change or highlight the way you read God's commands in this chapter?
19. The point of all this is not to ignore the need for adult evangelism and being a witness to a fallen world around us; it's simply recognizing that there is one area that provides significant return on investment when it comes to faith - investing in the spiritual growth of children and teens. In what ways is your church investing in the spiritual development of its children and the children of your community?
20. Pray and thank God for the work your church (and many, many volunteers!) does to minister to the children in your area.

**Spend FIFTEEN - Day Four**

21. There is no question that young people are leaving the faith at unprecedented levels for American Christianity. ([coldcasechristianity.com/2016/are-young-people-really-leaving-christianity/](http://coldcasechristianity.com/2016/are-young-people-really-leaving-christianity/)) If you had to conjecture, why do you think that is?

22. What could adult believers in the church do to reverse the trend?
23. Kara Powell, in her book Sticky Faith, has done a lot of research on why young people don't retain their faith. Startlingly (for those who have teenagers), the number one impact on a child keeping his or her faith is seeing faith modeled by their parents and talking about faith with their parents. ([crosswalk.com/family/parenting/why-we-must-talk-about-faith-at-home.html](http://crosswalk.com/family/parenting/why-we-must-talk-about-faith-at-home.html)) How does this match or conflict with your own experience with young people?
24. Sadly, according to research, fewer than 10% of Christian families actually have faith conversations together. Why do you think it's often so difficult for parents to talk about their faith with their children?
25. Sticky Faith says other adults have an impact, too. One of the top factors in a child keeping his or her faith, after his or her own parents was this: having other adults from church who were engaged in their lives! Whether you have kids of your own or not, what might be opportunities to invest in the faith lives of the children around you?
26. Read Proverbs 22:6. What is the benefit of starting children off early in their faith journey found in this passage?
27. Close your FIFTEEN in prayer. Pray for God to use you to influence your children and/or the children in your sphere of influence.

### **Spend FIFTEEN - Day Five**

28. We've spent a lot of time this week grappling with the importance of passing on the faith to the next generation of believers, generally in the context of our own families. But how might we be a blessing and encourager in faith of children who are not related to us?
29. The Bible makes what appears to be a very odd statement in James 1:27. Take a moment and read it. Then check out a slightly different verse: Jeremiah 22:16. What is the common theme of these two verses?
30. How do these verses differ on the results of taking care of orphans?
31. This quote has often been ridiculed by Christians, but in at least one sense, the Bible agrees with Secretary Hillary Clinton that it takes a village to raise a child. What point do these two verses make about the Christian community's responsibility toward all children?
32. Different people have different gifts. Some people aren't necessarily great with children. But there are a variety of ways to get involved with Children's Ministry at St. John. Check out the children's needs at [stjstl.net/next-steps/serve/serve-at-st-john/](http://stjstl.net/next-steps/serve/serve-at-st-john/). See if there is a way you can support the excellent way that St. John values all

children who come through our doors.

33. Close your final FIFTEEN this week in prayer. Ask God to help you to leave a legacy of faith to the next generation.