
Engage

Dear Lord Jesus, thank You so much for all the precious children in this world. We know they mean so much to You. We pray that You would help us to do all we can to protect and give them the start in life they deserve. Lord, we bring to You all of the wonderful work being done to release children from poverty, and we pray that You would bless every pair of hands that works for You. Increase and bless their efforts in Jesus Name, Amen.





SERMON SUMMARY

Note to Word Facilitator: The sermon notes below is a summary of the sermon. You may choose to further summarize it according to the needs and context of your CG members. The goal is not just to go through it “verbatim” but to prepare well, allowing members to recall and engage the message in the best possible way.

Family Discipleship #2: Children

Senior Pastor Chris Kam

Deuteronomy 6:4-9

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

Malachi 4:5-6

“See, I will send the prophet Elijah to you before that great and dreadful day of the Lord comes. He will turn the hearts of the parents to their children, and the hearts of the children to their parents; or else I will come and strike the land with total destruction.”

Introduction

The first sermon on Family Discipleship began last week, with the point that marriage is a powerful place for discipleship to take place. As husbands and wives disciple one another in their marriage, then only can the discipleship be extended to the children in the family. And from the children, discipleship is further extended beyond the family to the church, society and gradually, to the nation. There is, therefore, great emphasis on strong discipleship in families through the building of high-quality homes. It is critical to understand that high-quality homes are not the same as high-quality houses. High-quality homes outweigh high-quality houses as

the latter has a limited lifespan. Houses rely on external building materials and workmanship to raise physical structures, which do not guarantee the building of high-quality homes. Instead, high-quality homes are built on high-quality relationships and skilled leadership, which provides the grounds for spiritual training that has eternal implications.

High-Quality House	High-Quality Home
With High-Quality Material	With High-Quality Relationships
By Skilled Workmanship	By Skilled Leadership
Limited Life Span	Eternal Implication

By using an analogy of a school, here are four simple principles for the spiritual training at home:

1. The primary spiritual educator is the parent, not the church.

Parents often have the misconception that their children are to receive their full spiritual education in the church. Parents must understand that it is not the design of the church to be the primary spiritual educator. The church is to assist and not replace the role of parents to provide for primary discipleship. The church helps parents by equipping and providing support groups, so the parents are ready for their role as the primary spiritual educator. As parents, we need to be proactive in carrying out our responsibility to educate our children spiritually, especially in the first 17-18 years of their life, so that our children are equipped and have a strong foundation before they leave home.

Conferences such as D6 Malaysia Conference (3-5 August 2023 in DUMC) (website: <https://bit.ly/d6malaysia2023>) can help in encouraging the understanding on why and how we disciple.

2. The classroom is life itself.

The basis of spiritual education begins at home, and the classroom for the spiritual teachings is life itself. Therefore, love your God in front of your children. Talk about God wherever and whenever. Do not confine God to only the devotional times, but beyond and in all aspects of your life. Be intentional and have a spiritual conversation with God with your children. There is no point telling your children to love and serve God when you do not do the same. Therefore, live a life that honour, worship, and love God, and let this be reflected to your children. More is caught than taught through how we as

parents live our lives.

3. The curriculum is God's truth expressed into a few significant values.

How do parents teach their children what is right or wrong in life? The best way to approach this is to go to the word of God. The truth in God's word will impart significant values into your children's lives. There is no better way than to have your children feed themselves with the word of God for themselves. Develop family taglines or core habits that can be embedded into their lives, so that your children will grow up living by these core values.

4. The lecture is your life.

Everything that you do in life is a lecture. When parents obey or ignore rules, how parents treat each other and others, how parents honour God; these are all lectures without words. Therefore, lead by example as your children have the front row seat watching you as parents, on how you love and honour God, and what your life is saying about God. Remember that discipleship is intentional, as it is about imparting one's life to the next person. As such, train your children and disciple them well so they will live the kind of life that is pleasing to God.

It is God's desire that family discipleship also leads to reconciliation between parents and children. When Christ is in the family, God will be able to turn the hearts of the parents to their children, and the hearts of the children to their parents (**Malachi 4:6**). When a parent-children relationship is strong, there is acceptance, affection, and affirmation. God demonstrated this when He called Jesus during his baptism and said, "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased." (**Luke 3:22**). There was:

- **Acceptance** – You are my son – I am proud of you.
- **Affection** – Whom I love – I love you.
- **Affirmation** – With you I am well pleased – I affirm you in what you do well in life.

Conclusion

The way forward in impacting church, community, and the nation, starts with the discipleship in the family. Discipling each other (spouses in marriage) and your children, builds a strong foundation of integrating God into your family life and values. Be intentional in discipleship and know that living a life honouring God can be caught by your children and translated to the many generations to come.



APPLICATION

Note to Word facilitator:

As you prepare for this session, this is a great time to pray that the Holy Spirit will guide you to use the questions efficiently. You can select, modify or entirely create your own questions, according to the needs of your CG, especially if you feel that there are too many questions than required for the allocated time. The questions below are crafted with a certain flow in mind. You could use these towards the end or insert them in between your own sermon reflection and summary.

Suggested Icebreaker Activity/Questions

- Were you a good boy/girl when you were younger? Why do you say so?
- Have you thought of a tagline or a core habit for your family?



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Suggested Word Introductory Questions

- What is the Holy Spirit saying to you through this sermon? Can you summarise your thoughts in two or three sentences?
- What did you understand about “Family Discipleship” before the start of the sermon? And how does “Family Discipleship” look like to you now, after the sermon?

Suggested Questions linked to the Sermon:

- What differences are there in building a high-quality house versus a high-quality home? Which adjectives would you use to describe the dynamics of your home? What would you like to see more of, and less of? How does Deuteronomy 6:4-9 apply to your home? Describe in what ways you would like to implement this more intentionally in the next six months.
- In what ways are you modelling your faith to your children? Do they see you as a faithful disciple of Jesus? Why, or why not? (Share this in view of Malachi 6:6-7 'These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children.')
- The strength of a parent-children relationship can be fostered through acceptance, affection, and affirmation. Have you, as a parent, demonstrated this in your relationship with your children? What encourages or discourages you from this experience? And, if you are a child, have your parents shown you acceptance, affection, and affirmation in their relationship with you? How do

you feel and what was your experience like?

- If you are bringing a friend to join your family for dinner for the first time, how would you describe your family so your friend could have an idea of what to expect?
- Everyone is a child in a family, regardless if you are 5, 25, 35, 45 or 55 years old. In what ways do you feel your family is a blessing to you? What are you grateful for about your family?

Question Bank *(Extra questions that you can use to bring your discussion further as you see fit):*

- The primary spiritual educator is the parent, not the church. How do you feel about your role and responsibilities as the primary spiritual educator? Are there areas in discipling that you need help and prayers with? Share and pray for one another.
- Love your God in front of your children. What does this statement mean to you? How do you demonstrate this in your life? Give some examples and learn from each other.
- Do you talk about God wherever and whenever with your children? What does a spiritual conversation with God and your children look like?
- In your family discipleship journey, share how God's truth led to values or core habits that are now evident in your family. What triggered the event, how did you teach your children the right from the wrong, and how did it lead to the birth of the values or core habits. Share your story.
- As parents, we may find it challenging at times in discipling children that may not take well to our discipleship. There is resistance and reluctance all the way. What are some of these challenges? How did you navigate (or plan to navigate) through these obstacles? Share your stories to encourage one another in family discipleship.
- Pause and reflect:
 - What about me (children) that made you (parents) proud?
 - I (children/parents) am grateful to you (parents/children) for.....Was this an easy process to understand and be grateful for each other? Is there any reconciliation and forgiveness needed in your parents-children relationship? How can the CG pray for you?
- It takes a village to raise a child. In this context, who are the "villagers" involved in raising your children? And, are you a "villager" involved in raising someone else's children? In what ways do you support discipleship in your role as a "villager"?

SERMON REFLECTION



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Once a parent, always a parent. And once a child, always a child. No matter the age.

As parents, my husband and I have always attempted our level best to encourage and impart Christian living values to our kiddo, with varying degrees of success (to be honest!). We did what most Christian parents will do, starting off on the simple ABCs of Christian living such as saying grace before meals, reading Bible stories, going to God in prayer for healing when sick, trusting in God and praying for good exam results. As kiddo grows up, it becomes more challenging to integrate Christian values as he questions why some prayers are not answered. He constantly battles with distractions that robs his time from God and threatens to take him away from his core values too. As parents, we evolve too, so as to meet his growing needs. We tag-team our parental roles as nurturer, provider, manager, disciplinarian, and spiritual educator, to continue to guide kiddo. We embody a life that worships God by giving thanks in gratitude for all that God has blessed us with. We often praise God in

whatever circumstances, to impart on kiddo that God is real and is with us no matter the situation. We serve God in our different capacities, and encourage kiddo to do the same, and are thankful for his involvement in Christmas productions and children's choir. We have open conversations with kiddo and allow him to grow and make mistakes so that through these experiences, we convey to him that he will always have our unwavering acceptance, affection, and affirmation. In short, we are teaching kiddo that the life we live must reflect our gratitude to God.

As I ponder on my own experience **as a child**, I realised that a lot of what I have learnt was inculcated from my parents. My parents back then were converts and were very shy to share their biblical knowledge with us children. But they educated us differently and powerfully - in their serving, values and how they lead their life. As a child, I witnessed how my mother, with the little that she had, has always opened our house to host CG meetings and prepared the fellowship meals that follow. I recognized her big compassionate heart to mother others (my cousins) and how she always looked after them and visited them while they studied away from their home. I remembered how she continuously lived a life that is kind and trusting. And when my mother was diagnosed with cancer, she spent her last days praising God and seeking Him and was prepared to accept His will. And when my mother passed, my father lost his only life-companion and soulmate. But he was at peace, and never once blamed God. Such was their trust and love for God that they were able to accept and move on in life, remaining steadfast and grounded in His love.

As I try to connect the dots, I realise that my role as a parent and as a child has no ending, no matter my age. I pray that God's wisdom be with my husband and I, as we parent our kiddo. And I ask for God's grace too that I remain a good child to my father and that God continues to bless our relationship. As I was about to end my reflection, I looked over to my introverted teenage kiddo sitting beside me, and I asked him what tagline or core values that he could identify with in this family.

He replied nonchalantly : *"Don't lose yourself. Never give up and always trust God. If things don't work out, that's because it is not part of God's plan"*.

I shed a tear of gratitude as I signed off.

Contributed by Adeline Ting



PRAYER



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Note to CGL: You (or someone you assign this portion to), may lead by praying OR reading these prayers together as a CG during worship.

Children

Pray for:

1. Prayer Of Thanksgiving
2. Prayer To Know The Lord
3. Prayer For Their Peace
4. Prayer For Positive Influence
5. Prayer To Know The Voice of The Spirit
6. Prayer For Impact
7. Prayer For Strength And Wisdom



MISSIONAL

Note to CGL: Inspire and encourage the Cell Group members to participate in the activity suggested below (from our CrossFields, Missions department) together to cultivate a culture of being a missional church.



CrossFields

Missions Prayer Meeting

3 June 2023

9.15am - 11.00am

Room 103, Dream Centre

Breakfast at the Garden
at 8.30am

