

Family Worship

An opportunity to grow together as a family, centered around your faith, hope & trust in God through Christ Jesus.

What is Family Worship?

Parents are to be the primary spiritual influencers for their children, it's scriptural

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 ESV

[4] "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. [5] You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. **[6] And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. [7] You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.** [8] You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. [9] You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Genesis 18:19 ESV

[19] For I have chosen him, **that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD** by doing righteousness and justice, so that the LORD may bring to Abraham what he has promised him."

Psalms 78:5-7 ESV

[5] He established a testimony in Jacob
and appointed a law in Israel,
**which he commanded our fathers
to teach to their children,
[6] that the next generation might know them,**
the children yet unborn,
and arise and tell them to their children,
**[7] so that they should set their hope in God
and not forget the works of God,
but keep his commandments;**

We are commanded to talk of God and teach His truths constantly in our homes and especially to our children - the next generation, and to each other. We should not expect that our children learn all they need to know to become "Christians" during the 1½ to 4 hours per week that they spend at church. The most important influence on the spiritual formation of our children happens during the other 164 to 166½ hours each week (OK - 56 or so hours of this is spent sleeping, but you get the idea)

And we can't just hope that they "catch" it from us just by watching. Some of that happens for sure - but we also must be intentional about directly teaching our children and making it clear to them what we believe and in Whom we put our trust.

And we are called to worship God continuously, not just on Sunday mornings. Worship in our homes should look a lot like worship at church, although they will look different from family to family and home to home. But we should include reading the Bible, praying together, singing and scripture memorization. Age-appropriate discussion of the scriptures read is also very helpful and will keep it interesting and engaging.

Why should we do Family Worship?

It's Biblical

- The original church was the family and the original worship was family worship
- Before public worship was instituted under Moses - all worship was family-based worship
- Even after the establishment of public worship, families continued to be directed to "teach the commandments to your children" (Deut. 6:7)

It's Theological

- David based his personal devotional practices on that of the temple and applied the language of sacrifice in the Psalms. So started the new testament worship practice of "a sacrifice of praise...the fruit of our lips" (Hebrews 13:15).

It's Historical

- Protestants built on the Medieval Church practice of daily mass, and moved daily worship into the home - where godly fathers served as priests.

It's Practical

- Daily opportunity to model humble dependence on God,
- Ensures daily intercessory prayer on behalf of the family's needs
- Provides a daily setting for reading and instruction from the Bible
- Provides a forum for reinforcing scripture memorization
- Draws the family together at least once daily

Obstacles to Doing Family Worship

Fear of Failure -

"The kids will be bored and will not want to participate"

"The kids will ask questions that I won't be able to answer"

But in reality:

- Your kids will see their parents reading the Bible and discussing the truths contained in it and will be much more likely to understand, accept and follow your beliefs. They will become more interested, not less.
- One of the greatest things we can do for our kids is spend time with them learning about and discussing the Bible, our beliefs, and our view of the world through those beliefs. They will appreciate the fact that we might not always have the answer, but we will take the time to find the answer together.

Not Enough Time -

"We don't have any extra time to spend in Family Worship"

But in reality:

- We all find ways to make time for things that we find important.
- We schedule and prioritize *important* things in our life. We can schedule time for Family Worship the same way we schedule Dr. Appts, sports practices, etc.

Never Done it Before -

"We've never done it before, I wouldn't know what to do"

In reality -

- It probably will be difficult at first. But it's not really that hard - just read, sing, pray - that's all there is to it. No special training is required.
- Persevere! Ask God for grace and patience and don't begrudge your family the jarring sense of change. But they'll adjust.

Benefits - the Ultimate Goal of Family Worship

An opportunity for obedience - God clearly prescribes and commands family worship in His Word.

A chance for you to become the primary spiritual influencer in your child's life and an integral part of their spiritual formation as you are meant by God to be.

An opportunity to fulfill your responsibility to teach the next generation in the ways of the Lord.

Become a closer, more Christ-centered family - easier to comfortably pray together and for each other and discuss spiritual, scriptural matters together

Suggestions for Leading Family Worship Time

1. Just get started! Like everything else in life that you value, it will require discipline and sacrifice, so just get to doing it!
2. Schedule a time - 1 time, 3 times, 5 times a week - whatever works - stick to it!
Work up to daily as the ultimate goal
3. Be ready to adjust for irregularities - don't think you are doing it "wrong" if you don't stay exactly on schedule.
4. Decide on a topic and materials/methods to use
 - brainstorm with your spouse
 - search the internet
 - [Taft Avenue Website - Family Worship Page](#) - Resource links
 - [FamilyWorshipGuide.net](#) - Family Worship Guides and information
 - [Seeds Family Worship](#) - music for worship with children
5. Persevere - pray and ask God to guide you and help you stay on task.
6. **BE INTENTIONAL** - a Christian life must be lived intentionally - we will never be able to regularly do what we do not set out intentionally to do.

8 tips for Family Worship

- 1 - Keep it regular - Pick a day and time and stick to it - this will help make it a regular and expected part of your daily lives.
- 2 - Keep it easy -
- 3 - Keep it engaging - Adjust the teaching and length of the Bible reading to the ages of your children. Keep it relevant for their daily lives. Communicate with older children as adults whenever possible and allow them to help select topics and ask questions.
- 4 - Keep it real - Make sure your kids know that you are not perfect. Provide a model of grace, humility and forgiveness for them to follow. Model admitting when you are wrong and asking for forgiveness when necessary.
- 5 - Keep them growing - Think of practical ways to apply what is learned, encourage your children to live out what you discuss and learn together
- 6 - Keep it flexible - Schedule and regularity is very important, but will not always be possible - be creative and adapt to inevitable and unavoidable schedule changes
- 7 - Keep it imperfect - Keep trying and persevere when Family Worship doesn't go exactly as you had planned. Hold on to the truth that God's Word will not return void.
- 8 - Keep it fun - You want the family to eagerly participate, so make it enjoyable for all. Let family members take ownership of aspects of the worship time that they excel at or have an interest in (let your musical child lead singing sometimes, let the your new reader read, etc). This will keep worship fresh and fun for all!