

# FAMILY WORSHIP

## ELEMENTS AND MOTIVE

"Exercise thyself unto godliness." -1 Timothy 4:7

Paul writes, "Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord." (Ephesians 6:4) We know we should do it, but *how* do we start?

### Basic elements of family worship:

- Read
  - Through passages or books of the Bible, a Psalm, a Proverb, and discuss the passage. Children can retain and comprehend more than we give them credit.
  - Review the Sunday morning message to reinforce what they just heard.
- Pray
  - Ask for prayer requests and/or answers to prayer
  - Ask for volunteers to pray
  - Pray for unsaved family and friends
  - Pray for our church, our pastor, and our missionaries
  - Pray for our country and its leaders
- Sing
  - Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs (Eph. 5:19)
  - Acapella, with instruments, with stereo speaker
  - Children learn and memorize things well when they are put to music
- Additional helpful methods
  - Read supplemental materials that complement and reinforce what you are teaching from the Scripture (Pilgrims Progress, The Hiding Place, missionary biographies, etc...)
  - Memorize scripture together (Simply Charlotte Mason scripture memory system is just one way to do this together)
  - Catechisms – this is a question and answer method to instruct and train Biblical truths and doctrine. There is one called *The Baptist Catechism* that is 118 questions and answers.

### Timing

Be brief – Know your audience. Small children will have a much shorter attention span than a middle schooler. This doesn't need to take a great deal of time.

Be flexible – Find the best time to meet for your family. It may be right after dinner before everyone gets up and disperses for the evening. Maybe it's just before bedtime for the smaller children. There

may be a night when you are out late grocery shopping or visiting family and that's ok.

Be consistent – This is one of the most important and most difficult things for your family worship to be. It is far too easy to fall out of the habit even after you have been doing it consistently for weeks.

### Motivations for Family Worship

As parents, we want to obey God's commands in scripture to teach our children. We also hope and pray that our children would be saved and come to know the God of the Bible personally through this time of family worship together.

Family worship provides a great environment for your children to ask you important questions. As children encounter God in the context of family worship, it prepares them to begin spending time with God on their own. It also equips children to face the world and all that is opposed to the gospel.

### The "What if?" questions...

- What if the father is not a Christian?
  - Maybe he would read the Bible with the family if he was asked to do so, otherwise mom can lead if the husband is not willing to participate.
- What if there is no father at all?
  - The responsibility falls to the mother
  - Church leaders could also assist periodically
  - In 2 Timothy 1:5 we see that a grandmother and a mother played an important role in Timothy's spiritual training
- What if the children are very young?
  - Exercise discipline and patience
  - You will make a lasting impression upon them
- What if there is a wide range of ages?
  - Ask age appropriate, broad questions.
  - You may find yourself surprised at some of their answers and observations!
  - This prepares them for corporate worship at church!

"Just remember that there is no family worship situation that has not been addressed by Christians for centuries. You are not alone in the circumstances that make family worship difficult. We tend to think that we have unique problems, and our flesh wants to excuse us from family worship on the false grounds that our situation is an exception...God deserves to be worshiped daily in our homes by our families. And for that reason, start today." -Donald Whitney