**Family Worship**

(adapted from Jim Newheiser)

 Every Christian family should recognize the need for and benefit of dedicated time spent together helping one another grow and mature in becoming like Christ. Some call this time “Family Devotions” or “Family Worship”, but all Christian families need to make spending time together in Bible study, prayer and other expressions of worship a priority in the home.

 Though many Christian’s would affirm the need for family worship, many have trouble consistently practicing it. Some aren’t sure how to accomplish it. Others have tried, but quickly became discouraged and gave up. Whatever the situation might be, the goal of this session is to encourage us all to see the tremendous value and blessing of family worship and to provide ideas and resources to help make it a reality in our homes.

**I. Important Introductory Ideas**

 **A.** Why Should You Have Family Worship? (Deuteronomy 6!)

 1. God has **commanded** His people to know and live out His Word (Deut. 6:6).

 2. God has given you the **responsibility to train** your children (Deut. 6:7; Eph. 6:4)*.*

 3. This is one way a husband can **show love** to his wife (Eph. 5:25-26).

 4. We need to **counter** the bombardment of ungodly influences: media, TV, internet, movies, entertainment and peers.

 Proverbs 13:20 *“He who walks with wise men will be wise, but the companion of fools suffers harm.”* (need to walk with and learn from the Lord!!!)

 **B.** Husbands and Fathers are particularly called to be spiritual leaders in the home!

 1. You are to be the **leader**, **feeder**, provider and protector of your family (Deut. 6:4; Joshua 24:15; Ephesians 5:25ff; 6:4) *Choose this day whom you will serve …*

 2. A wife can be a tremendous **help** and **encouragement** to her husband (Genesis 2:18; Proverbs 1:8; 6:20; 31:26; 1 Peter 3:1-6)

 3. What if there is no Christian husband/ father in the home … (or one disobedient to the Word?) Psalm 68:5-6; Proverbs 6:20-23; 1 Cor. 7:14; 2 Tim. 1:5; 3:14-17

 *(The Lord can use a godly woman to turn the hearts of her children to the truth)*

 **C.** The Goals and Benefits of Family Worship!

 1. To acknowledge **God’s rightful place** as our King and give Him worship!

 Psalm 96:7 “*Ascribe to the Lord, O families of the peoples, Ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.8 Ascribe to the Lord the glory of His name*.”

 2. To train up our children in ***the way they should go***! (Proverbs 22:6)

 a. Teach them the **gospel** and a gospel centered life!

 2 Tim. 3:15 “*and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus*.”

 b. Prepare them for the **responsibilities** of living their lives before the Lord (Book of Proverbs!) (goal of parenting is to transfer dependence to God – born totally dependent on us / goal is to teach total dependence on God)

3. To **strengthen & bless** the local church and advance the Kingdom of Heaven!

 Matt. 6:33 “*But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness*”!

**II. How to Lead Family Worship**

 **A.** First, God’s Word Must Be **in Your Heart**! (Deut. 6:5-6; 2 Tim. 2:2)

 1. Family worship should be the natural over flow of a life of personal worship

 *Do you love the Lord with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength? v. 5*

 *Do you delight in the Scriptures, studying them daily? v. 6 Ps. 1*

 *Do you fear and serve the Lord your God? v. 13*

 2. You cannot effectively teach your children to be stronger Christians than you are.

 Luke 6:40 “*A pupil is not above his teacher; but everyone, after he has been fully trained, will be like his teacher*.” (This has implications for who should teach your children – they will become like their teachers!)

 3. Family worship should occur with or without children!

 *(if no children or /// before children – husband and wife)*

 B. God instructs you how to train your children ... ***train them diligently***!

 1. Informal instruction is essential (Deut. 6:7-9)

 a. Teach your children **by example**

 Philippians 4:9 “*The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you*.”

 b. Teach them in the milieu of life (every-day events of life) Deut. 6:7

 c. Learn to **listen to** your children and hear their hearts!

 Proverbs 18:13 “*He who gives an answer before he hears, it is folly and shame to him.*”

 2. Formal instruction is essential

 a. You must be **intentional** about family devotions or it won’t happen!

 2 Timothy 2:15 “*Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth*.”

 Ephesians 6:4 “*Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord*.”

 b. You must **plan for** and **protect** your family worship time!

**III. What to Do for Family Worship**

 **A**. **Teach God’s Word Diligently**!!!

 Deuteronomy 6-7 “***These words****, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart.****7****"You shall* ***teach them diligently*** *to your sons*” ... (children/ family)

 1. Read and listen to God’s Word!

 Suggested tools:

 - http://www.faithcomesbyhearing.com/

 - G. Horner’s Bible-Reading System

 2. Talk about what is being taught at worship services! (sermons – take sermon notes and then discuss!)

 3. Study the Bible together - inductively!

 See Valley Height’s website: “Bible Study Tools” for some great helps!

 4. Do Topical Studies!

 Suggested topics:

 The character of God, the gospel, the fruit of the Spirit, obedience, love, friendship, attitudes – (kindness, mercy, anger, selfishness, forgiveness, self-control, overcoming worry and fear etc.), money, work, family, relationships, wisdom ...

 Tools:

 “Practicing Proverbs” by Richard Mayhue

 Creation Ministries website!

 “For Instruction in Righteousness” by Pam Forster

 “Our 24 Family Ways: to see this resource search http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/1888692073/evegoopat-20

 **B**. **Pray Together**!!! (pray Scripture)

 1 Thessalonians 5:17 “*pray without ceasing;18 in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus*.”

 1. A suggested format: ACTS

 a. Adoration

 b. Confession

 c. Thanksgiving

 d. Supplication (requests)

 2. Use the THEMES found in the prayer the Lord taught (Matthew 6:9-13)

 3. Pray for others! (Church family; personal family; missionaries; leaders etc.)

 Make a prayer tree!

 4. Record how God answers your prayers and give Him thanks! (Thanksgiving Day)

 **C**. **Sing Together**! (sing Scripture)

 1. Make Your Own Praise and Worship Song Book!

 - collect songs from the music leader at your church / buy a hymnal

 2. Listen to Biblical / God-centered music (and sing along!)

  **D. Be Creative!!!**

 **E. Ask others for ideas!!**

Notes:

Responsibility of parents to children = shepherd (includes leading, feeding, providing for and protecting)

Responsibility of children to parents = obedience and honour (so that it may go well for you and that you may live)