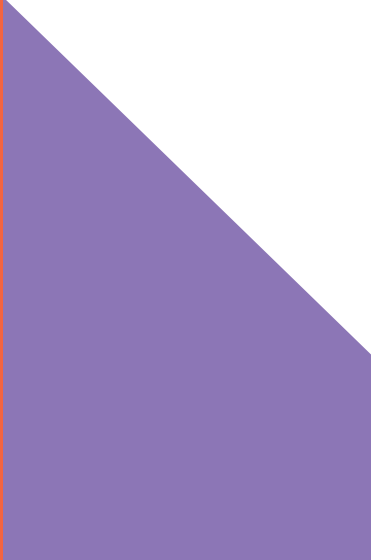
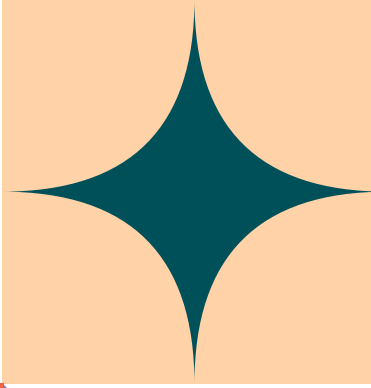


**THE
PLAYBOOK**

How to Practice Family Worship



The purpose of this resource is to help you lead family worship regardless of age or experience. This book is filled with examples of activities for engaging the Bible, praying, and singing together. Lastly, there are sample liturgies for family worship to get you started with the spiritual discipline and hopefully help you establish a rhythm of devotion in your home!



"I beseech, I entreat, I charge you to begin and continue the worship of God in your families from this day to the close of your lives."

-Samuel Davies

"A church in the house will be a good legacy, nay, it will be a good inheritance, to be left to your children after you."

-Matthew Henry

WHAT IS FAMILY WORSHIP?

It is the spiritual discipline of intentionally and actively discipling our family and worshipping the Lord. This looks like a dedicated time to gather together and practice devotion to the Lord

WHY SHOULD WE DO FAMILY WORSHIP?

1. The Bible commands it
2. This is the primary plan for the discipleship of our children
3. To establish devotional rhythms that will last a lifetime
4. To teach how to love the Bible, prayer, and singing as worship
5. To reform the church - singing, serving, giving, witnessing, literacy, theology, etc.

BIBLICAL EXAMPLES OF FAMILY WORSHIP

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.

Genesis 17:19

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. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Deut. 6:7-9

But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

Joshua 24:15

We will not hide them from their children,
but tell to the coming generation
the glorious deeds of the Lord, and his might,
and the wonders that he has done.
He established a testimony in Jacob
and appointed a law in Israel,
which he commanded our fathers
to teach to their children,
that the next generation might know them,
the children yet unborn,
and arise and tell them to their children,
so that they should set their hope in God
and not forget the works of God,
but keep his commandments

Psalms 78:4-8

Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

Ephesians 6:4

HISTORICAL EXAMPLES OF FAMILY WORSHIP

Martin Luther wrote a hymnal and catechisms to equip his church. Luther led his family in family worship that included catechisms, prayer, and singing.

John Knox wrote a letter to the Scottish Church to encourage men to lead their families in family worship with the Word of God being central. His influence contributed to commands for family worship in the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Second London Confession of 1689.

Richard Baxter challenged people to practice family devotions daily. As a pastor, Baxter claimed there was an observable difference between the families that practiced regular family worship and those that did not based on how they lived their lives and responded to life's circumstances.

Matthew Henry practiced family worship daily in his home and claimed, "This is where the Reformation must begin." Henry claimed that family worship was an inheritance to leave to your children.

J.W. Alexander wrote a great book called *Thoughts on Family Worship* to give reasons for family worship and equip people to observe the practice.

Charles Spurgeon practiced family worship daily with his wife and two sons. Spurgeon invited guests to join in family worship so they could see the practice and participate in it.

READ



READ *DON WHITNEY'S LEVELS OF BIBLE INTAKE*

1

Hearing

2

Reading

3

Studying

4

Memorizing

5

Meditating

6

Applying

Read a Bible passage out loud for everyone to hear

- Can be lead by father - read well
- Can take turns reading each night
- Can breakup longer passages

Read through a Bible reading plan:



Read through a chapter of a storybook Bible

- Have kids follow along with pictures
- Have kids act out the story

Learn the books of the Bible

Learn different genres of the Bible

Learn major characters in the Bible and their stories

- Adam/Eve, Noah, Abraham/Isaac/Jacob
- Joseph, Moses, Caleb, Joshua
- David, Saul, Solomon
- Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel
- The Disciples, Paul, Timothy

Act out a passage from Scripture

Listen to the Bible from an app

- YouVersion
- Dwell

Meditate on a word or phrase from the text

- Key term
- Characteristic of God
- Nature of Man

Study a passage of Scripture - paragraph

- Observation - what do I see?
 - Look for key terms
 - Who, what, when, where, conjunctions
 - Look for things that are emphasized
 - Amount of space, stated purpose, order
 - Look for things that are repeated
 - Terms, phrases, patterns
 - Look for things that are related
 - General to specific
 - Questions and answers
 - Cause and effect
 - Look for things that are alike & unlike
 - Similes and metaphors
 - The use of 'but' and irony
 - Look for things that are true to life
- Interpretation - what does it mean?
 - Content
 - Context: Literary, Historical, Cultural, Geographic, Theological
 - Comparison
 - What does other scripture say about this?
 - Culture
 - Consultation, Concordance, Bible dictionary, Atlases, Bible commentaries
 - Application - How does it work?
 - In your personal life
 - In your family life
 - In your church life
 - In your work
 - In your community

Memorize a verse or passage of scripture

- Listen to it
- Read it
- Speak it
- Repeat it
- Write it
- Put to rhythm like chant or song
- Add motions that go with key terms
- Use an app for memorization - Verses

Recite memory verse/passage

- Can be done each time
- Try new verse/passage each month

Learn a catechism question

- One per night
- Review previous questions each time - this will take more time the more you learn

RESOURCES

Holy Bible

Study Bible

Explorer Bible for Kids - CSB

Jesus Storybook Bible - Sally Lloyd-Jones

One Big Story Bible Storybook - The Gospel Project

The Biggest Story Bible Storybook - Kevin DeYoung

My First Bible: In Pictures - Kenneth Taylor

The New City Catechism

The New City Catechism for Kids

Cornerstones - Brian Dembowczyk

A Gospel Primer - Milton Vincent

The Pilgrim's Progress - John Bunyan

Books/Devotionals by Marty Machowski (The Ology, Long Story

Short, WonderFull - not a typo)

Books by Danielle Hitchen (Board Books for young kids)

The Beginner's Gospel Story Bible - Jared Kennedy

A Visual Theology Guide to the Bible -

Tim Challies and Josh Byers

PRAY

The New Testament explicitly commands believers to “continue steadfastly in prayer” (Col 4:2) and “pray without ceasing” (1 Thes 5:17). Likewise, the Old Testament is filled with prayers of the Israelites praising and crying out to God. The Psalms are rife with examples of prayer and mentions God’s inclination to hear our prayers. Prayer is an act of worship because it demonstrates a relationship and dependence on God.

Praying in family worship should be done **OUT LOUD** to teach the family how to pray and for the encouragement of other believers.



One person lead the time of prayer

One person opens the prayer, people can take turns praying in the middle, another person closes the prayer

Pray for the person on your right

Take prayer requests

“Yay God!” - praises and thanksgiving

- Each person shares something they are thankful for today and then everyone shouts “Yay God!” - great with little kids

Pray for members of church, staff, elders

- As a group
- By name

Pray for neighbors, extended family members, friends

- As a group
- By name

Pray for those that you know that do not know Christ as Savior

Pray for Missions - the spread of the gospel

- In our community
- In our country
- In our world

Pray for missionaries - by name

- Alliance Missions Update email
- Missionary Wall at the church
- Voice of the Martyrs

Practice the posture of prayer

- Sit still
- Heads bowed
- Hands together
- Palms up
- Look at verses in Psalms that talk about posture in prayer

Pray through prayer prompt

- 5 things to pray series
- Application from sermon

Pray through the Lord's Prayer

- Bonus - talk about each phrase

Pray through a Psalm

- Use the words and phrases of a Psalm to guide the prayer

Pray through a written prayer

- Every Moment Holy
- Valley of Vision
- The Book of Common Prayer

Use flashcards to write down people and prayer requests

- You can also write down when a prayer request is answered

Pray through a prayer deck (connected to one above)

Pray through ACTS prayer model

- Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication (requests)

RESOURCES

Psalms

Every Moment Holy - Douglas McKelvey

Valley of Vision

Book of Common Prayer

5 Things To Pray Series

SING

The Bible does not exclude anyone from the practice of singing. Instead, the Scriptures speak to the continuum of musical ability by commanding those who “make a joyful noise” and those who “make melody” unto God to worship him. Singing is more about the heart of worship than the sound produced so have some fun!



Sing a cappella - without instruments

- Doxology
- Hymns
- Scripture songs

Sing with a recording - Spotify/YouTube

- Sunday Worship Playlist
- Sunday Setlist - social media

Sing with Instruments

- Piano, guitar, ukulele, etc.

Sing with classroom instruments

- Shakers, tambourine, hand drums, jingle bells, etc.

Sing with dancing (Dance Party) - Younger kids

- Incorporates movement with singing
- Psalm 149:3

Resources

Hymnal - Hymns of Grace

New City Catechism - songs for young kids

YouTube - Sunday Worship Playlist

Spotify - Sunday Worship Playlist

Weekly Setlist - Social Media

LITURGIES

These sample liturgies are designed to get you started quickly in family worship. Experiment with these as you begin establishing the rhythm of family worship in your home, bible study, or life group. The first set of liturgies is for all ages, but I have included some liturgies for younger children towards the end. The hope is once you see how to build a liturgy, you can build your own with the plays listed earlier based on the needs of your family.



Liturgy #1

READ

Choose a Psalm and read it out loud (a few options: Psalm 13, Psalm 23, Psalm 139), each person taking turns reading a few verses at a time.

Answer the question out loud: What characteristics of God are portrayed in this Psalm? What human emotions are expressed?

PRAY

Share prayer requests. Allow one person to lead in prayer, acknowledging each specific request and responding to the characteristics of God named in the Psalm.

SING

Sing a hymn about the character of God, a cappella or with a recording on Spotify. Example: Great is Thy Faithfulness or How Great Thou Art.

Liturgy #2

READ

Choose one family member to read James 1:1-18. Re-read verse 17 out loud together ("Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation of shadow due to change.")

Discuss the spiritual attributes listed in the passage (ex: steadfastness, wisdom...). Take prayer requests, specifically centered on trials you are facing.

PRAY

Let each family member pray for one other specific family member until everyone has been prayed for.

SING

Sing the Doxology a cappella together!

Liturgy #3

READ

Read Colossians 1:15-20. Discuss the different titles for Christ in this passage. How are they related? How are they different? Try memorizing this passage as a family.

PRAY

Pray through Valley of Vision prayer "Christ is All."

SING

Sing a song about Christ (Worthy of Your Name - Passion; In Christ Alone; Jesus the Son of God - Alliance Worship).

Liturgy #4

READ

Read a Psalm of Praise, such as Psalm 136
Offer up praises by sharing things God has done in each of your lives recently.

PRAY

"Popcorn" pray (it helps to establish who will open and who will close). Give thanks to God for answered prayers and blessings in your family.

SING

Choose a song from the "Sunday Worship" playlist on Spotify that praises God for his goodness (Example: Faithful by Gateway Worship). Listen and sing together.

Liturgy #5

READ

Read Matthew 28:16-20 (The Great Commission) out loud together.

Give each person an opportunity to name someone they know who may not know the gospel. Discuss verse 17 (Jesus meeting the disciples in the midst of their doubt). Can you relate? How can Jesus meet you where you are and empower you to live out the Great Commission?

PRAY

Pray for each person mentioned by name, and ask the Lord for boldness to share the gospel.

SING

Sing the hymn "Jesus Paid it All."

Liturgy #6

READ

Read Philippians 2:12-18 (“Do all things without grumbling or disputing...”)

Ask the question - what tasks during the day tempt you to grumble? If you sought the Lord in those moments, how could you become light in the dark world?

Write verses 14-15 on notecards and give each family member one to place somewhere helpful.

PRAY

Choose a prayer from “Every Moment Holy” that has to do with a task mentioned. Read it in call and response form, or popcorn read.

SING

Choose a song from the Sunday worship playlist to sing together as you listen.

Liturgy #7

READ

Ask everyone to bring a passage that has been an encouragement to them, or one the Lord is using to teach them something new. Give each family member a chance to read their passage.

PRAY

Thank God for his word and for the way it changes our hearts. One person can lead this prayer, or you can take turns praying out loud.

SING

Sing the hymn "Be Thou My Vision."

Liturgy #8

READ

Read Question 1 from the "New City Catechism." Talk through the answer and memorize it. Read through the accompanying Bible verse and read the commentary provided.

PRAY

Pray through a prayer from Every Moment Holy. Choose from Daybreak, Midday, or Nightfall depending on the timing of family worship.

SING

Sing the song "Christ Our Hope in Life and Death" by The Getty's.

Liturgy #9

READ

Listen to the Sermon on the Mount as a family through a recording. Encourage everyone to have Bibles open in front of them. Ask everyone to write down 1) something that encouraged them 2) something that challenged them 3) a question they have.

PRAY

Pray through the Lord's Prayer together.

SING

Sing through the hymn "The Solid Rock". There are recordings on the Sunday Worship playlist, but this can be sung a cappella or with instruments.

Liturgy #10

READ

Get a small piece of paper for each family member. Without helping each other, see if each person can write down all 10 commandments. Bonus points for all of them IN ORDER. Then turn to Exodus 20 and read through the commandments together. See what was missed and then memorize them together. You can look up hand-motions online.

PRAY

Pray through the ACTS model. Praise that we worship a holy and perfect God. Acknowledge that we have all broken this law at some point. Give thanks for the cross and the sacrifice of Jesus. Pray for others by name that they might know the grace of Jesus, rather than struggling to live the perfect life.

SING

Sing through "All Sufficient Merit" by Shane and Shane.

LITURGIES FOR YOUNG CHILDREN



Liturgy #1

READ

Read through a chapter of a Storybook Bible. Ask some reflection/comprehension questions: Who were the people in the story? What happened in the story? What did that story teach us about God? What did that story teach us about US?

PRAY

"Yay God!" - take turns sharing one thing that you are thankful for today and afterwards everyone shouts "Yay God!"

SING

Dance Party

Turn on one or two songs from the Sunday Worship Playlist and encourage your kids to dance AND sing. They may start only dancing, but encourage them to sing. Don't forget to model singing!

Liturgy #2

READ

Read through a catechism question from "New City Catechism for kids" - there is a free app available as well as a book. Work on memorizing the question and answer. Both parts are important for learning.

PRAY

Pray through the Lord's Prayer. It may take practice to learn this prayer. Try it a few times to help them learn the phrases.

SING

Sing the song associated with the catechism question. They are usually short but helpful to remember the question and answer.

Liturgy #3

READ

Read Psalm 23. Talk about what a "shepherd" does. If God is our shepherd, what are we? What kind of shepherd is God? What are the things he does for us?

PRAY

Pray through the Psalm. Use the language of the Psalm to thank God for being our good shepherd, giving us rest, providing for us, protecting us, and leading us.

SING

Pull out the shakers and tambourines. If you don't have those, then use hands for clapping and drumming on their lap. Sing through the song "Psalm 23" by The Corner Room.

Liturgy #4

READ

Read through Galatians 5:22-23. Memorize the fruit of the Spirit with your kids. Talk about what each one means.

PRAY

Pray for your family by name that they might bear these fruit today and this week. If there is a specific fruit that is needed, pray for that.

SING

Sing through the song, "The Fruit of the Spirit" by Slugs and Bugs. Feel free to dance and sing on this one.

Liturgy #5

READ

Read through a chapter of Pilgrim's Progress. Discuss what is happening in the journey that is "real to life". Help the kids to bridge the gap from "story" to our life. Do we ever make poor choices? How can we learn from Christian? What are some things that are difficult in the walk with Christ? Who is the Good Shepherd?

PRAY

Pray for a missionary. You can find ABF missionaries on our website, through our missions newsletter, or our missions wall at church.

SING

Pick a "hymn of the month" and sing it. Try "How Great Thou Art" or "Nothing But the Blood"

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Family Worship - Donald Whitney

Family Discipleship - Matt Chandler and Adam Griffin

Sing! - Keith and Kristyn Getty

Family Worship - Joel Beeke

Praying the Bible - Donald Whitney

Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life - Donald Whitney

A Praying Life - Paul Miller

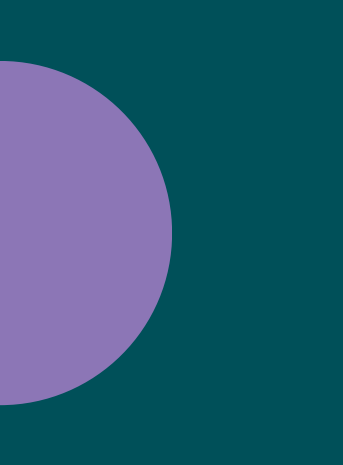
Sunday Worship Playlist:

Spotify:



YouTube:





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