

Family Worship & Application

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Family Worship can be – and should be! – so much fun! It provides a wonderful opportunity on a regular basis for each person in the family, from the parents to the children no matter how young or old they may be (and guests who may be present), to engage in the study, teaching, *and application* of God's Truth as found in the Bible. As a family opens the Word of God together, reads it, hears it explained, and then seeks to apply that truth wonderful change can happen in a family's life because change takes place in the heart on an individual level.

I want to provide a handful of ways that family worship enhances biblical application.

1. Family Worship Provides Daily Opportunities to Apply the Word of God to Each Person's Life.

As a family reads the Word consistently, the father and mother can seek to take the accurate meaning of the biblical text and apply the text to the heart, mind, and life of each person in the family. Not only do opportunities to apply the Word exist but they are daily if in fact family worship is occurring on a daily basis (or as frequent as a family is able to conduct family worship).

2. Family Worship Allows the Father to Model Humility in Acknowledging Where He Has Failed to Properly Apply a Text or Principle to His Own Life.

Undoubtedly there will be times when the biblical text reveals areas in the father's life where he has acted wrongly, his thinking has been in error, he needs to ask forgiveness from someone, etc. and family worship can provide a very instructive moment to the children as the father models humility in acknowledging his fault. He affirms that he has not applied the text to his own life in this or that particular area. He asks for forgiveness. He clings to God's enabling grace. And the children see their dad humbly, biblically, genuinely confess his sin & seek to change with the Spirit's help.

3. Family Worship Proves that All of Theology Is Applicational.

No theology can remain as mere head knowledge. Theology must lead to doxology. It must lead to change. It must lead to worship. And as the family gathers for worship and the hymns are sung, the Scriptures are read, and prayers are lifted, the reading of the Word *and* the applying of the Word shows that all of the Word – from Genesis to Galatians, from Song of Solomon to the Acts of the Apostles, and from Jonah to James – can be (rightly) applied to our lives to produce change by God's grace and with the help of the Spirit.

4. Family Worship Models for Everyone – Including the Youngest of Children – That All of God's Word is Profitable to Make Every Christian "Thoroughly Equipped for Every Good Work."

Jeremiah 15.16 says that Jeremiah found and ate the words of God. He took God's Truth and ate it thus internalizing it. Similarly, God told Ezekiel, feed your stomach and fill your body with His Words (Ezek 3.2). So Ezekiel ate and then went to the house of Israel to speak God's Words to them (Ezek 3.3-4). In the same way, all of God's truth should be internalized so that we as God's children grow into mature Christians. The Word of God is

God-breathed and is profitable so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work (2 Tim 3.16-17). The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple (Ps 19.7). As a family reads the Word of God and discusses it, every person in the family observes and learns how all of Scripture is necessary for accurately knowing God, man, the gospel, and salvation. The study and application of the Word in family worship shows the kids that the Word of God contains what we need for skillful and wise living.

5. Family Worship Teaches the Children Proper Hermeneutics as Application Must Flow Out of Accurate Biblical Interpretation.

In family worship, as the Word of God is consecutively read, the parents can teach the children from the youngest of ages proper hermeneutics (that is, biblical interpretation) so that a verse is not randomly selected from a random book of the bible making a random application that is disjoined from its original context (and thus, not what the original author intended). But when the Word is read and explained, a father and mother can show how the meaning of a particular text can reveal a command from the NT epistle to be obeyed, or perhaps an attribute of God that should affect our thinking or our lives in a specific way, or learning from a bad example from a story in the OT narrative. All application should flow out of accurate biblical interpretation. And as a family studies the Word together and gets at the meaning of the text, then they can ask the "so what?" question and rightly apply it to each person's life. This models, then, such a glorious practice of faithfully, rightly, contextually, and intentionally understanding the text and arriving at a correct biblical application so that we would always be faithful to "rightly divide the word of truth" (2 Tim 2.15).