

Family Worship & Scripture

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The discipline of family worship cannot be overemphasized. Living in such a day in which we live where biblical ignorance generally soars at extreme heights, family worship clings to the glorious truth of God's Word. A family that implements family worship regularly thus teaches the preeminence of Scripture, the clarity of Scripture, and the applicational nature of Scripture. God gave His Word so that His Spirit-indwelt Children would be able to understand, comprehend, apply, and rejoice in the divine riches contained in the Bible.

In the following, I want to provide some ways in which family worship upholds the preeminence of Scripture and the practicality of its fullness.

1. Family Worship Centers on the Theological Truths Revealed in the Scriptures.

When family worship is conducted, each part of the worship time together can teach truth and reiterate Scriptural principles to each person in the family. For instance, in the singing, the family lifts their voices together in theologically rich – and, of course, accurate – songs and hymns. In prayer, the family beseeches God in the name of Christ and by the interceding grace of the Spirit. Every element of family worship centers on theological truths that arise *out of* the Scriptures. Whether it is a hymn on the glorious character of God or a prayer expressing trust in the Fatherly care and provision of God, or reading through a particular book of the Bible, different theological truths that find their source *in God's Word* are present.

2. Family Worship Works Through the Whole Bible for Instruction & Application.

As the family gathers to read the Word of God together during family worship, it allows the family to work consecutively through books of the Bible – both the Old Testament and the New Testament. God gave His people a whole Bible to make a whole Christian. Ministers are to teach and preach the full counsel of God to our churches. How much more must the father shepherd (pastor) his family by teaching, admonishing, equipping, and instructing from all of Scripture. Whether it is Moses or Matthew, Exodus or Ephesians, 1 Samuel or 1 Peter, Ruth or Revelation, all Scripture is "God breathed and profitable." And as families gather together to read and study God's Word, over the years as the children grow and increase in learning and understanding, they will become more familiar with the breadth, unity, and glorious truth found in the entirety of God's Word.

3. Family Worship Allows the Father to Teach the Children the Words & Works of God.

The Word of God tells parents to incline ears to instruction and not to conceal these instructions from the children but rather to tell the generation to come the words, works, and praises of God (cf. Ps 78:1-4). God gives fathers the distinct privilege to bring their children up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. The Scripture reveal occasions where children ask their parents about a particular memorial or occasion and the fathers are to tell their children how God faithfully led, protected, guided, and delivered His people in the past (cf. Josh 4:6). This shows that God can be trusted in the present because He has proven Himself faithful time and time again in the past. Many occasions arise during family worship to teach the children the words of God contained in the pages of Scripture and the myriad of works of God that the Scriptures reveal. The children must learn these and know them so they learn that God is sovereign, powerful, trustworthy, and saving.

4. Family Worship Promotes the Preeminence, Centrality, Authority, and Necessity of God's Word in All of Life.

When a family comes together daily (or as often as possible) for family worship and every person in the family knows that God's Word will be read, studied, explained, and applied, this evidences the preeminence of Scripture and it promotes – in the minds of everyone present – the centrality of Scripture in all of life. The more the Word of God is opened and read reverently and worshipfully, it holds forth the centrality of Scripture, the authority of God's Word, and the necessity of submitting to God's Word at all times and in all occasions. From the youngest of children to the oldest child, they will experience day after day (for years!) the highest privilege a creature could ever experience, namely, having God Almighty speak through His sufficient and clear Word. And over the course of many years, everyone will know that the reading and explaining of God's Word is the most important element of family worship and that it is absolutely necessary for godliness in all areas of life.

5. Family Worship Creates Moments of Theological and Applicational Discussion and Enhances Greater Understanding of the Glory of God & His Saving Gospel.

In the reading through the Scriptures during family worship times, undoubtedly occasions will arise where difficult texts are hard to understand. This will create precious moments where the father can explain using other Scriptures to help support, explain, clarify, or apply a tougher text. Or, perhaps the father will not know the meaning of a text that is examined and he may have to do further homework later on (in a commentary, etc.). This can provide very fruitful discussion as different members in the family may recognize different elements in the immediate context to help shed light on the meaning of the hard verse being discussed at that point. Family discussion on the Word of God over the course of many years enhances understanding of the supreme glory of God and the unfathomable riches of His saving gospel offered to rotten sinners.

6. Family Worship Models for the Children that God's Word Contains the Answers to All of Life's Problems & God Has Graciously Given Us His Word to Lead, Guide, Direct, & Protect His Children Through Life.

When attending to the Word of God regularly and reminding the family that all of God's Word is inspired and it is sufficient to make the man of God "adequate – equipped for every good work" (2 Tim 3:16-17), it models for every individual in the family that going to the Bible *alone* to find answers to life's problems is the wisest and only course of action when dealing with different sins and counseling situations. A particular text that is read in family worship may reveal a situation of anxiety, bitterness, fear, anger, immorality, hard-heartedness, stubbornness, hypocrisy, or any kind of sin and reading the Bible consecutively, faithfully, repeatedly, completely will provide many opportunities to apply particular Scriptures to particular sin-problems. This will not only help solve the immediate sin-problem at hand but it will demonstrate for the young children that God has truly given all things necessary for life and godliness so that we may be conformed into the image of Christ. In a sense, family worship that is centered on, committed to, confident in, and applying thoroughly the Scriptures repeatedly hammers home the notion of biblical counseling. That is to say, the man of God, indwelt by the Spirit of God, taking the Word of God, bathing everything in prayer to God can replace sinful patterns with new habits of life to produce change for the glory of God and for greater conformity into the image of Jesus Christ.