

Family Worship & Theology

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One major benefit that results from conducting regular times of family worship is that each member of the family is consistently taught and reminded of theological truths. Family worship and theology are interconnected and cannot be separated.

This article briefly presents a few ways that family worship and theology fit together so as to further support the urgent cry for families to incorporate this discipline into its daily life and culture.

1. Family Worship Will Inevitably Teach Theology to All Members of the Family — Including Young Children.

So many methods that churches and families incorporate with young children ignore theological doctrines — perhaps, the difficult or the uncomfortable ones. When a family consistently reads through books of the Bible with the desire of studying the entire Bible with the children over the course of many years, all members of the family (including the youngest of children) learn systematic and biblical theology. Theology is a discipline that is not reserved only for the scholastic or the parents. Theology is for all people. In fact, every person is a theologian; that is, every human has some idea or concept of God in his heart already. That theological grid needs to be usurped by and then shaped according to the Word of God. Every person in a family should learn solid theology — even the young children.

2. Family Worship Will Examine the Entire Spectrum of Theological Doctrines As a Family.

God gave us a whole Bible so as to make a whole Christian. When families conduct regular times of worship, over a period of time, the entire spectrum of theological doctrines will be touched upon. The breadth of theological foundations will be examined — from bibliology (doctrine of the Bible), to Theology Proper (the doctrine of God the Father), to Christology (the doctrine of Jesus Christ), to pneumatology (the doctrine of the Holy Spirit), to angelology (the doctrine of angels), to anthropology (the doctrine of man), to hamartiology (the doctrine of sin), to soteriology (the doctrine of salvation), to ecclesiology (the doctrine of the church), to Israelology (the doctrine of Israel), to eschatology (the doctrine of last things). What a glorious reality to have every member of the family learning doctrine as it is found in the Scripture that is read and studied during family worship.

3. Family Worship Will Model the Practice of Allowing Scripture to Interpret (and Support) Scripture So As to Understand the Fullness of a Theological Concept.

As the family reads the Word together and questions arise concerning a particular passage, the method that the father uses to find the answer will serve as a tremendous instructional opportunity for the children. They will see how the father turns from Scripture to Scripture, from verse to verse, from Old Testament to the New, to show how the Bible interprets itself. The Bible is, in fact, its own best interpreter. This means that the father (and mother) should themselves be students of God's Word. (A good study Bible or a Bible with a good concordance in the back can be especially helpful in this regard.) Theological doctrines are not formulated from a random phrase or a hidden verse. But as a verse is seen in context and then as it is supported by other texts in the Bible, one can

understand the fullness of a theological concept and the richness of comparing Scripture with Scripture to add fullness, color, and ever-glistening beauty.

4. Family Worship Exemplify How Believers Must Sit Under the Authority of God's Word Even in Difficult Passages.

As a family gathers to worship God and learn from God's Word, it will not take long for a family to come to a text that baffles the human mind. For instance, one will see in John 1 both the humanity of Jesus and the deity of Jesus clearly presented. In Genesis 1, one reads about the supernatural creation by God Himself by the spoken breath of His mouth in six literal days. One will find in Psalm 136 that God is everywhere-present; if a man ascends to heaven, God is there and if he descends to the grave, God is there. Mark 15 teaches that on the cross God the Father crushed His own Son. What amazing mystery is there in these verses! A family that consecutively reads through the Bible will come face to face with miracles, events and theological concepts that defy mere human explanation. But as a father and mother exemplify the necessity of sitting under the supernatural, sufficient, inspired, and God-given revelation found in the Bible – even in those concepts that are hard to understand – the children will see the importance of Scripture and both the submissive and obedient spirit necessary to rightly interpret and properly apply the Bible.

5. Family Worship Proves the Inexplicable Depth of Scripture As a Family Studies a Text Repeatedly and Continues to Gain Insights Through the Years.

A family may work through the Bible and over the course of time they may repeat a study in a particular book. If a family examines 1 John and then they come back to it years later, each person will realize how much it seems that they missed in the previous study. This shows how unspeakably rich and inexplicably deep God's Word really is. A simple mind of a toddler can grasp its basic truths and yet the most brilliant scholar who has ever lived cannot fully master any concept that the Bible teaches. This proves to the children that the Bible is infinitely worthy of study and it is always worthy of our careful study and application since we will never reach the depths of its amazing glory.

6. Family Worship Will Present the Theological Beauty of the Glory of God & Its Necessary Relation to Any and Every Issue in Life.

It could be well-argued that the central interpretive motif in the Word of God is the glory of God. From the first verse of the Bible to the last verse of the Bible, it is all about God and His supreme, unrivaled, glory displayed and in His eternal delight in manifesting His own glory. And as a family reads the Bible together, sings hymns together, and prays together consistently, God will relentlessly be shown as beautiful because His glory is inseparably involved with everything. From a sickness, to a death, to a joyful experience, to a conversion, to forgiveness and restoration, to a tree in creation, to a sunset over the beach, to a catastrophic natural disaster, everything has as its end goal the glory of God. Everything. And the more that a family is committed to worshiping together on a regular basis, the more the theological beauty of the glory of God and its necessary correlation showing itself in practical obedience for the glory of God proves that everything in life is in some way directly related to God and in His glory. If for no other reason, a family commits itself to the regular discipline (and means of grace) of family worship, it will magnify the beauty, worth, splendor, and joy found in the glory of God.