

Family Worship & Future Generations

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One important element of family worship is the thinking that this important discipline will impact not only the immediate children in the family but future generations as well.

I want to encourage families to engage in family worship with a view not only to the immediate family but bearing in mind the reality that parents have the privilege of investing in children who will pass on the same truths to their children and then they can pass on the same truths to their children. The degree to which a family is committed to regular family worship can positively affect generations to come.

1. Family Worship Models the Supremacy of God in All Things.

The greatest legacy parents can leave for their children is a biblical and robust confidence in the all-pervasive supremacy of God in all things. In all areas of life and in all seasons of life, God reigns supremely on heaven's invincible throne. For the children to see the father and mother enraptured with the greatness of God, rejoicing in the glory of God, and living for the magnification of God in all areas of life is the greatest gift a parent can leave to his children. Family worship provides a wonderful way to model a God-centered mindset in all areas of life.

2. Family Worship Upholds the Glory of Christ & Its Relevance for All of Life.

When a family joins together in singing hymns, reading Scripture, and praying together, the amazing theme in all of Scripture – namely, the beauty and glory of Christ and His redemption – rises to the surface repeatedly. And when the gospel is applied to all of life, everyone present sees the practicality of the Christian walk. When the children see the parents upholding the glory of Christ rather than the exaltation of self and when they view the parents taking biblical truth and intentionally implementing it in their lives, discipleship is happening. And family worship provides a model for the children to see how Christ is glorified and how He is obeyed as they observe the parents following Christ.

3. Family Worship When Done Consistently Becomes Part of the Everyday Rhythm of a Family.

Consistency and repetition is a vital means of learning. God repeats Himself constantly through Scripture. He emphasizes who He is, what He has done, and what He requires of His people. Repetition breeds learning. As a family partakes in family worship times regularly, the children see not only that family worship is essential to a family's welfare and blessing but also they see how important it is for a Christian's life generally (that is, to be communing with God through singing, Scripture, prayer, and other believers). As family worship becomes part of the regular rhythm of a family's culture, it teaches the children that worshipping God is a way of life (not a "Sunday only" event) and thus it models the need for them to engage in the consistent practice of family worship when they are older, married, and out of the home.

4. Family Worship Teaches the Children How They Can Conduct Family Worship When They are Older, Married, & With Families of Their Own.

A family makes time for what is important. When a family views family worship as a priority, they will allow for family worship in the weekly schedule. And as children observe dad and mom leading family worship day after day, week after week, month after month, and year after year, they will have a thorough example set before them of how they can then lead their own families in worship when they are out of the house with children of their own. Thus, family worship keeps the mindset that the dad and mom are not only investing in the children immediately present but also for their children, and then their children's children.

5. Family Worship Includes the Thinking that Christianity is Not a Decision or a Seasonal Way of Life; Rather, It Is a Lifelong and Joyful Pursuit.

Following Christ cannot be defined as a decision, a prayer, or an asking Jesus to come into one's heart. Rather, Christianity is a way of living. It is a completely new transformation that is wrought in the sinner's heart by God Himself which then evidences itself as that saved sinner begins the ongoing, fervent, and aggressive (and lifelong) pursuit of Christlikeness. Family worship constantly has the opportunity to ring this truth to all who are present — especially children. Fathers and mothers have the privilege of challenging the children to examine themselves and their fruit. Opportunities arise for heart-searching conversations during family worship. The children need to learn that easy-believism is not true Christianity. Parents must chant repeatedly the chorus that following Christ is a lifelong pursuit and a joyful privilege! And one's assurance of salvation comes not through a dad or mom (or pastor) guaranteeing a person is saved (because of a prayer prayed, an aisle walked, the right feeling) but rather through the Holy Spirit who testifies in the sinner's heart that he is, in fact, truly a child of the sovereign King.

6. Family Worship Commits to Teaching who the Lord is and the Works that God Has Done for His People.

It took only one generation after the people of Israel wandered in the wilderness and entered the Promised Land for the people of Israel to arise and "not know the LORD, nor the work which He had done for Israel" (Judges 2:10). Sadly, if parents do not pass on biblical truth to their children, they are susceptible to forgetting the Lord, doing evil in God's sight, serving false gods, and forsaking the Lord thus provoking Him to anger (Judges 2:11-12). But family worship provides a glorious remedy to this sad peril as the parents can teach who God is and the many works that God has done to the children faithfully, regularly, and biblically. Obviously this cannot save a child. Nor does it guarantee a child will seek Christ and follow Him. But family worship takes seriously the commitment that parents have to take the truth of God and pass it on faithfully and intentionally to the next generation. Thus, family worship has long-term goals in mind.

Psalm 78:2-7 — I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings of old, Which we have heard and known, And our fathers have told us. We will not conceal them from their children, But tell to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, And His strength and His wondrous works that He has done. For He established a testimony in Jacob And appointed a law in Israel, Which He commanded our fathers That they should teach them to their children, That the generation to come might know, even the children yet to be born, That they may arise and tell them to their children, That they should put their confidence in God And not forget the works of God, But keep His commandments.