

# Strengthening the Bond – What the Bible Teaches on Marriage

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## Family Worship in Marriage

### The Importance of Family Worship

M. Henry: "...Make a business of your family religion, and not a by-business. Let it be your pleasure and delight." This is encouraged in the Scriptures.

- Joshua 24:15b: As for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.
- Job 1:5: ...Thus did Job continually
- Deut. 6:4-7: ...and thou shalt teach them diligently unto the children...
- 1 Pet. 3:7: ... and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered
- Acts 10:2: Cornelius ... one that feared God with all his house
- Exodus 12:26-28: ...when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye...? That ye shall say: it is the sacrifice of the LORD's Passover.
- Jeremiah 10:25: Pour out thy fury upon the heathen that know thee not, and upon the families that call not on thy name.

### The Parts of Family Worship

1. Scriptures – the Word of God should stand central in our homes. Teach, instruct and apply.
2. Supplication – our homes should be places where prayer is wont to be made (Acts 16:13). "Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord" (Gen. 4:26). M. Henry: there are family cares to be cast upon God by prayer. There are family comforts to be fought for. Family blessings to seek, family mercies to crave, family temptations to strive against.
3. Song – "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" (Eph. 3:16). Singing the Psalms of Zion is meant to teach us of Himself and ourselves and the life of prayer and praise.

### The Manner of Family Worship

1. Brevity – M. Henry: you need not be long in the service, but you ought to be \_\_\_\_\_
2. Consistency – it is better to be consistent than to start & stop. J. Alexander: "Family worship provides us the manna which falls every day at the door of the tent, that our souls are kept alive."
3. Solemnity – Heb. 12:28-29: "let us grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear; for our God is a consuming fire."
4. Lovingly – J.C. Ryle: "Love is one grand secret of successful training. Soul love is the soul of all love."

5. Attentively – We should say with Samuel: “speak Lord, thy servant \_\_\_\_\_” (1 Sam. 3:9).
6. Heartily – Col. 3:23: And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men.

### **The Purpose of Family Worship**

1. God’s Honour
2. God’s Truth – “if ye continue in the faith grounded and settled” (Col. 1:23)
3. God’s Presence – “where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them” (Matt. 18:20).
4. God’s Favour – M. Henry: “Family religion will help to make our family-relations comfortable to us, by promoting love, preventing quarrels, and extinguishing heats that may at any time happen. A family living in the fear of God, and joining daily in religious worship, truly enjoys itself.”

### **The Challenge of Family Worship**

1. “*We don’t have time or there are scheduling conflicts.*” Family worship ... non-negotiable!
2. “*We have children of all different ages.*” Accommodate!
3. “*I am not good at leading family worship.*” Do your best! If you have but one talent... but don’t bury the one talent, for then it shall be taken away (Matt. 25:28).
4. “*I can’t sing.*” The world knows how to sing its songs; shall we not do what we can to sing God’s praise?

### **The Covenant of Family Worship**

Ryle: I charge you, fathers, take every pain to train your children in the way they should go. I charge you not merely for the sake of your children’s soul; I charge you for the sake of your own future comfort and peace. Truly your own happiness in great measure depends on it.

Solemn covenant: “to reform our families, engaging ourselves to a conscientious care to set before us and to maintain the worship of God in them, and to walk in our houses with perfect hearts in a faithful discharge of all domestic duties, educating, instructing and charging our children and households to keep the ways of the Lord.” (Puritan congregation in Dorchester, MA)