

**The Family & Worship: Part II**  
VARIOUS SCRIPTURES

REVIEW

What is *worship*? Worship is the inward act of ascribing inestimable worth to something, which then moves a person to outwardly praise, delight, and humbly bow down before it. Or put simply, worship is a heart attitude which then moves to an outward action.

**TRUTH: Families must regularly and corporately worship God in the home.**

*There are five reasons why families must worship God together in the home.*

- I. WORTHINESS: GOD IS INFINITELY WORTH SUCH WORSHIP.
- II. PURPOSE: WE WERE CREATED TO WORSHIP GOD
- III. WARNING: THERE ARE DEVASTATING CONSEQUENCES IF WE DO NOT
- IV. DESIGN: GOD DESIGNED THE HOME FOR FAMILY WORSHIP
- V. WISDOM: WE FIND AND LEAD OUR FAMILY TO THE PATH TO LIFE

If these five reasons for worshipping together as a family are valid then we must determine which family worship looks like. Many of you may have grown up in a family where "family devotions" were a regular staple in the home. Others of you may not have grown up in a Christian home or perhaps though your parents were Christians they still did not do "family devotions" (either because they didn't know how to do it or they did not see it as necessary). Hopefully you have come to the realization that family worship time is important and a biblical concept. The only question that we must consider is what it should look like in your home.

Initial Considerations

Before we look at the essential elements to family worship I want to provide for you several considerations.

1. *Don't Get Discouraged* — You may be someone who has desired to provide your family with "family devotions" on a regular basis and continually seem to fail. The process of leading your family in devotion to Christ is a process that will take time—and that is ok! Scripture describes the Christian life as a process of progressive sanctification (i.e. you will continue to grow in Christ with both ups and downs). Press on—keep trying! The more you try the better you will become in leading your family.
2. *Each Season Looks Different* — Each season of life brings with it unique circumstances that effectively renders the concept of family worship *not* a "one size fits all." Consider the following "seasons":
  - A. Single. Everyone is born this way. There is a guarantee that at one point in your life you are or were single. Your might be one who is in the adult season of life and joyfully single. You may not have a wife/husband or children but that does not mean you are exempt from a form of family worship. As a child of God you have become joint-heirs with Christ and now have a host of brothers and sisters you can call your family. However, you may be an adult

who is single who desires to be married and have a family with whom you might share/lead in family worship. If the Lord has placed in your heart the desire to be married then seek to be the husband/wife who will focus on his/her personal walk with God so that when (in God's good providence and timing) you should get married you are prepared to lead, encourage, and participate in family worship (cf. 1 Cor. 7).

- B. Couples. You may be a newly married couple who are beginning the amazing adventure that is called marriage. Hopefully even before you got married you were building your relationship upon the rock of Scripture. Within Scripture you find the significance of the family unit, the importance of the husband's role as leader in the marriage relationship, and the wife's unique perspective and role as biblical teacher to the children day-in and day-out which in turn aids in tying the family together. It is so important to worship together as a couple in those early years before children (should the Lord so bless you). You may be a couple in the "post-children" years. You have attempted to raise your children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. Now you are grandparents who can still be a shining influence on your children and grandchildren (cf. Joshua 4:1-7, 19-24).
- C. Families with Children in the Home. Now that you have children in the home you are at the most important stage in the life of family worship. You have the immense privilege of being in the trenches with your children as you instruct them in the ways of Christ (Eph. 6:4). The younger years are perhaps the most challenging. It is hard to keep a two-year-old's attention! Your young children may not entirely understand all of the theological concepts which you grasp. With younger children, your family worship may last only five minutes—and that is ok! During the young children years: be patient. You may not see initial fruit from your labors but do not be discouraged. Your labor will not be in vain in the Lord. Also, include the children. Just because your child is two does not mean he or she is too young to participate in the family worship to Christ. Preach the gospel to them—that is what they need. Be as consistent as you can. Find a time that works best for your family and then attempt (as much as lies within you!) to stick to it. You may be a family with teenagers in the home. Don't assume that taking your teen to church is enough. Your teenager is at a growing crossroad in his/her life. They must see your unwavering commitment to worshiping Jesus Christ and Him alone. Teenagers can see through facades which adults place up. Do not be a hypocrite; be real with them. Transparency with your teenager is vital to capturing his/her heart. Help your teenager see the joy that is found only in worshiping Christ and feasting on His Word. If you do not, be sure that they will attempt to find a "substitute joy" which Satan and the world are both more than happy to provide.
3. *Lower Expectations* — You may have the expectation that your family worship time will be electric. You hope that your children will sit quietly and listen to your carefully crafted 45-minute expository sermon on the hypostatic union of Christ from Philippians 2. Come back down to earth! You are dealing with short attention spans, the digital age in which we live, little children minds, family conflict, your own sinful inclinations, teenager attitudes, or (in a word) the effects of the Fall of mankind (cf. Gen. 3:1ff). Don't expect perfection—either from yourself or the rest of your family.
4. *Find A Time* — Perhaps the greatest issue today is the fact that 21st century humanity is obscenely busy. We barely have any time to have a meal together let alone worship Christ together. It is of utmost importance that you find a time which works best for your family. If you are a family with children, find a time that works for all of your schedules (morning, evening, mealtime, etc.).

Now that we have considered these initial observations, let us consider the essential elements to family worship. There are three: *reading Scripture, praying passionately, and singing joyfully.*

## I. READ SCRIPTURE

Scripture tells us the the Word of God is powerful (Heb. 4:12). We know that God's Word is truth (John 17:17). The Bible provides us with timeless examples of what our lives should and should not look like as we live before the face of God (Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:6, 11). Scripture reveals to us who God is (and especially reveals to us Jesus Christ). If we hope to find that our children are on the pathway whose trajectory leads to life then we must read the holy Scriptures.

What might this look like? You could use a devotional book or perhaps read a devotional book that is age appropriate. You could tell your younger children Bible stories. You might select a specific text to work together on (e.g., the Gospel of Mark). You could work through a catechism together and study the pertinent Scripture passages. When you read, read in an interesting and engaging way. At appropriate levels discuss with your family implications of the truths you have read about. Be prepared to confront where necessary.

## II. PRAY PASSIONATELY

God's people are a praying people. They humble themselves before Him as their Sovereign. Because of the death of Christ we can enter into the most holy place (Heb. 4:16). Your prayers, then, should be regular and persistent—like the wide Jesus described in Luke 18:1–8. Bring your burdens together as a family before the Lord (James 5:16).

When you pray you should model the prayer our Lord gave to His disciples. Your family will greatly benefit from this corporate time of prayer. When you come before the Lord as a family, bring your cares and concerns, such as:

- Your family (both the saved and the unsaved)
- Missionaries your church supports
- Church leadership (please pray earnestly for you pastors!)
- Your country and government officials
- The persecuted church around the world.

When you pray with your family, please remember to model what our Lord Himself did when He prayed: "not my will but yours be done." We will only say "If the Lord wills we will do this or that."

You can also incorporate the P.R.A.Y. acronym that Pastor Dickson has taught us.

- Praise
- Repentance
- Ask
- Yield

## III. SING JOYFULLY

We as Christians have a new song in our hearts—a song of praise to our Redeemer. The Bible contains its own songbook (Psalms). Music is one expression of worship we can offer to the Lord. God's redeemed people are a singing people (cf. Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:19–20). You may not sing well but

you have a greater reason to sing than the most accomplished pagan! Why wait until eternity to sing?

Try to find songs that are theologically rich and sound. With little children, teach them a song that may be accessible, or choose a verse of a well known hymn that you can sing over and over until they have the verse memorized.

## NOTES