

# Family Worship



Worship is the expression of love and gratitude from the heart of God's child to the heart of God the Father.

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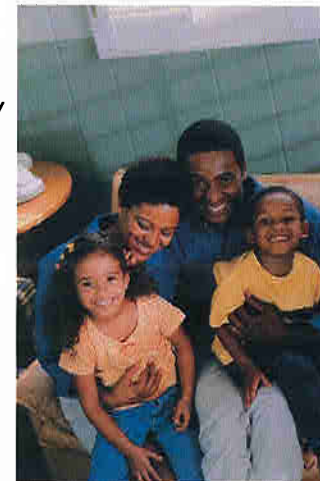
## What is Worship?

Worship is the expression of love and gratitude from the heart of God's child to the heart of God the Father.

With the above definition of worship in mind, the spiritual life of an entire household can and should be nurtured through a family worship plan. What greater calling did God give us but to bring up our children in the "nurture and admonition of the Lord."?

What occurs in corporate worship on Sunday is directly related to what has occurred in

the individual and family life all week long. Think of the impact that family worship could have on the overall worship environment of your local church! This could significantly impact virtually every ministry of your church, from children and youth ministries to worship ministries to discipleship ministries to outreach ministries. Take a moment to let these ideas spark your creativity. Use them as suggestions. Your family is unique. Your worship will be unique.



# Thoughts on Family Worship

## Meal-Time

Sing the blessing:

*Praise God from Whom  
all blessings flow,  
Praise Him all creatures here below,  
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host.  
Praise Father, Son and  
Holy Ghost. Amen.*

One doesn't have to be a musician to be a part of a family singing praise to the Lord. Encourage young children to make up their own songs of thanksgiving for meal time. Many families develop their own songs, poems, prayers, etc.

## Bed-Time

Have Mom or Dad read a passage of scripture and pray with the children. For pre-schoolers, come up with a prayer that they can recite on a regular basis. When we were small my sister and I would wait in our rooms for our mother to come and pray with us a bedtime. I still remember the prayer.

Mom or Dad ask the children to name one special thing that happened to them that day. This may open the door to discover traumatic things as well. Then ask the children to name one way in which God can use them tomorrow. Talk about some fun family activity that might take place in the near future.

## Family Worship Night

Don't use the excuse, "We are just so busy these days we are hardly all together at home." Do something to make a change. Set aside one evening a week for family worship. **Make it fun!** Don't try to paint a picture that worship is something that bores us. Make it interesting. Ask yourself these questions:

- 1) What can I do to make it fun?
- 2) How can I keep it short and to the point?

- 3) How does it honor God?
- 4) Will it make a difference?
- 5) How will it relate to the ages of the children?

## Pray

Consider making the family table an opportunity to pray together (over more than just the food). Make it a point to come together at dinner, as much as possible and have each family member be prepared to share.

Don't be afraid to **pray over your children**. Ask them, "How can we pray for each other?" Be sure that they know there is no silly prayer request. God cares about the small stuff.

**Pray about world affairs.** Each week could be a different focus area—the President or hurricane victims are a couple of ideas. What do your children hear on the news? Let the age and maturity of your children dictate the topics and depth of prayer for world affairs.

**Pray for missionaries.** There are many resources for missionary prayer requests. You may communicate with a specific missionary family and share requests. You can also contact the International Mission Board ([www.imb.org](http://www.imb.org) or 800-866-3621) or the North American Mission Board ([www.namb.net](http://www.namb.net) or 800-544-PRAY) for prayer requests.

## Pray for your church leaders and church family.

Teach them to honor their ministers. Pray for the ministers and their families.

**Keep an ongoing prayer list.** Consider making a chart of prayer requests. Let the artistic one in the family design art-work for the chart. Be sure to leave space for answered prayers. Keeping in mind that sometimes the answer isn't necessarily what we want it to be, this becomes a teachable moment.

## Sing

This scares some people. Don't worry. The Bible says to "make a joyful noise." Find a good praise and worship CD and select a favorite song from it. Or better yet, give each child an opportunity to pick the song that we will sing/listen to as a family. If anyone in the family plays guitar or piano ask them to prepare and play/sing a song of praise. If not, no sweat. Listen to music. Listen to a song with your kids (age appropriate) and ask them to listen for truths like:

- the power of God
- the nature of God
- the love of God
- the holiness of God
- our love for God
- creation
- forgiveness of sin.

Encourage each family member to write a poem that expresses their faith in God, or a hurt that they feel or something that has happened that makes them happy.

## Holidays

Use every holiday as an opportunity to teach your children about God's goodness to us. Create your own family traditions for the holidays. Be creative. Sit down and plan your year and what specific festivals and holidays you want to observe as a family. The internet is a vast resource for these types of celebrations.

Keep in mind that God created music for our fulfillment and for us to offer back to him as a worship offering.

## Advent/Christmas

Request a "Family Worship Guide" for advent. Many churches provide this as a service to their church families during the holidays. There are scripture readings for each day or week of the advent season. Make an Advent calendar with the children, counting

down the days until Christmas. This can help the children to keep the focus on Christ without diminishing the excitement of the holidays.

When lighting your tree or outside lights for the first time each season, read from John 1:1-4 or other passages describing Jesus as the Light of the World. Sing a Christmas carol (like Silent Night) that everyone knows. Pray as a family and commit to make this season Christ-centered.

## Lent/Easter/Pentecost

Focus on the Old Testament prophecy of Christ's suffering (Isaiah 53) as well as New Testament accounts. Keep in mind the developmental stages of children and what they are capable of comprehending. Throughout the season of Lent, allow your family worship to be directed to the Resurrection of Christ, rather than just the suffering and crucifixion.

## Independence Day

Sing together or listen to recordings of patriotic music. Attend patriotic festivals and performances. Be pro-active in placing a love for freedom in your children. Focus on the freedom that is ours in Christ.

## Thanksgiving

*By Him (Jesus) let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His Name. -Hebrews 13:15*

Thanksgiving should take place every day. Especially at Thanksgiving time, though, ask each family member to express specific people or things for which they are thankful. Sing the blessing. Use the *Doxology*, *Thank You Lord, for Saving My Soul*, or ask the children to make up a song of thanksgiving.

Develop a family thanksgiving list. Work on it together and post it in a prominent place. What are you thankful for?