

# THETA KIDS!

## FAMILY WORSHIP!

By the grace of God, there has been a renewed interest in what Christians in centuries past have called “family worship”- a time during the day when the family comes together to praise and worship God. The problem is that many parents who see the need to do this, and who want to step out and try having a time like this in their own families, have no idea how to go about it. Some people hear “family worship” and think that they couldn't do it because they can't preach or sing. Others may fear how their children (especially older children) might respond to the idea. I want to give you some brief encouragement.

It doesn't take much to make a difference. I did not grow up doing a regular family worship time, but my father did read the Bible to me at night when I was a young child. That simple practice has stuck with me ever since- I have never forgotten those times and God used them to instill in me a love and respect for his word. It doesn't take a sermon. Simply reading the Bible together as a family can have a powerful impact. There are some nights when our family doesn't do anything more than read a chapter together and pray. The Word of God is powerful all by itself. Maybe you could start by reading a Gospel with your family, one chapter at a time. Even one story at a time.

You don't need to be a theologian. One of the most effective things about daily family worship, or “faith talks” or “Bible time” is simply that you are showing your family that God is the center of your life. You don't need to be able to answer every question or problem that might arise. First off, you probably won't get many questions so don't use that as an excuse. Secondly, a question you can't answer is an opportunity to show your children what humility looks like. I'm not afraid to say “I don't know the answer to that.” What's great about doing that is that it provides you the chance to say “Let's find out the answer together!” As Christians, we are all growing and none of us are perfect or know everything!

You don't need to be a musician or singer. First off, there is no rule that says you have to sing a hymn each night. It is a great thing to do, and kids usually love and learn through singing, but family worship doesn't have to be like a planned worship service. Don't worry if you can't sing! Just enjoy praising God with your family. There are other options. Get a good album of Worship Music, or sit around your computer and look up hymns on Youtube and sing along with them! Be creative and enjoy the time.

Be A Christian at Home. That seems obvious, doesn't it? But really, if you believe that your life has been bought by Christ, and that glorifying God is the greatest thing you can do, model that for your children. Don't limit faith talks or family worship to the dinner table, or to just before the kids go to bed. Take your children out for ice cream, one on one. Pray with them individually. Ask them if they've thought about how they can glorify God with their siblings, or at school. But most importantly, live for Christ in all YOU do and show your family that Christ is the most important thing about your life.

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Here are some things that our family does regularly. We don't do all of these each night, and we don't have a regular schedule for when we do one or the other of them. But we do something each night with our family, usually right after dinner while we are all together.

1. We may just read a chapter of the Bible together, and then pray a prayer thanking God for our day, and all the amazing things He did that day. We use a book like Long Story Short-Ten Minute Devotions To Draw Your Family To God for our family worship time. This book is great because it has really good discussion questions. It essentially walks you, as the parent, through a Bible Study for your family.
2. Sometimes we just pray. We will ask each of our children to think of something that they are thankful for, and we'll pray for that. Then we will ask them to think of something that we can pray to God about. (If their petition is about themselves, I will usually ask them to also think of something we can pray for about someone else)
3. We pray for Christians around the world, and for Christians in our own church. We pray for our church regularly, and we hope that our kids will see just how important the Church is. God says that the Church is Jesus' bride, and we want to act like it with our kids!
4. We will sometimes do Catechism questions. As they have gotten older, we are finding that it is better to be more regular with these if you are doing them. They are well worth it though!
5. Sometimes we will read a passage, talk about it, and then sing some songs together. We may use the guitar, or we might just sing without accompaniment. The kids love it, and we let them dance around the room while we sing. I admit it. Sometimes we just sing praises the whole time!

We make sure it is just structured enough that we know each night that the time after dinner is family time, but we're not formal about it. We've got a two year old who flies planes around in his head, and sometimes there is a crash landing on one of his siblings, but we work it out soon enough. But you know what? That two year is watching his older sisters who do sit and engage, and he is growing up to learn that this is what our family does. We make God the priority in our home. One day, he'll be able to read along with his sisters too.

So don't worry. Family Worship time can be awkward. You can get stumped by a little girl sometimes. But you are doing something so much deeper and more powerful than just watching TV, or surfing the internet, or even just sending the kids outside. You're rooting your family on the Word of God, and training your kids that God is real, He is the most important part of your family, and He is their only hope. Don't give up!

If you have any questions about doing this with your family, or you just want to talk about families, parenting, or anything else, please feel free to send me an email or catch me at church. I'd love to get together and talk!

For His Glory,  
Kevin