

The Beginners Family Worship HANDBOOK



**A simple guide for starting
family devotions in your home.**

The Beginners Family Worship Handbook

A simple guide for starting family devotions in your home.

Dear Parents,

This booklet is a practical guide for starting family devotions. My aim is make this material as simple as possible. Every family must “learn by experience,” so the key is to *get started and keep trying*.

This guide won't tell you everything. But it will tell you everything you need to know to *get started*.

You may still have questions after reading this booklet. Don't let those questions become excuses. Use this guide to *get started* today.

How to use this booklet

There are four sections in this booklet. You should read through the booklet several times, and then refer back as you begin to practice family devotions.

1. Basic information to help you get started
2. Principles for family worship
3. Three sample plans for family devotions
4. Additional ideas for *after you start*

I'm praying for you; please let me know if you need additional help. To be successful, you must schedule several times for family devotions over the next week. Simply getting started is the biggest problem you will experience. Let me encourage you once again *to get started today*.

Your Servant In Christ,
Tony Kummer

The Beginners Family Worship Handbook

A simple guide for starting family devotions in your home.

Part 1: Basic information to help you get started

Definition: *Family Worship* is the regular and intentional gathering of a household to praise God together.

- Regular = consistent, habitual, normal
- Intentional = planned, deliberate, on purpose
- Gathering = coming together, meeting, assembly
- Household = family unit, everyone living in your home
- Praise God = worship, expressing love, showing value, glorifying

What should we do?

Family worship includes three basic elements and allows room for variety. **Read – Pray – Sing** is a simple format that will help you *get started*.

- **Read** from the Bible or Bible Story Book. Worship begins when *God speaks to us through his Word*. So, family devotions should include a time of reading the Bible. This can be as short as 5 minutes if your children are young. I've listed specific examples in part 3.
- **Pray** as a family. Worship includes responding to God through prayer. So, family devotions should include a time of talking to the Lord. There are different ways to lead the family in prayer. I've listed specific examples in part 3.
- **Sing** together to God. Another way to respond to God is through singing. So, family devotions should include songs of praise to God. You can sing, "Jesus loves me" or sing along with a worship CD. I've listed specific examples in part 3.

The Beginners Family Worship Handbook

A simple guide for starting family devotions in your home.

Part 2: Ten Principles for Family Devotions

1. **Worship is about God.** Family devotions are when you meet with God as a family. Don't let the details hide the big point – you are gathering together to hear from God and respond to Him in love.
2. **Make it important.** You can make family devotions a regular and joyful part of your home life, but you must make it a priority. Don't let time pressures rob your family of the eternal treasure of knowing God.
3. **Keep it short.** For most families, 15 minutes several times each week will work well. As your children mature, devotion time will naturally become longer. But regular short meetings are better than occasional long meetings.
4. **Make it fun.** Everyone should look forward to family devotion time. Use role-playing to act out Bible stories, or invent motions to accompany the singing.
5. **Use songs that teach.** Not all songs are equal in learning value. Choose songs that tell about the character of God and incorporate Bible verses.
6. **Same time, same place.** Getting into a pattern (or habit) will make family devotions a normal part of your home.
7. **Learn as you go.** Experience will become your teacher. Since every family is different, you will need to discover what pattern of family worship best fits your home life.
8. **Use variety in prayer.** Alternate who leads prayer, or ask the children to pray aloud in turn. You can even have the children copy aloud after you as you pray.
9. **Avoid distractions.** Turn off the television and remove toys from the area. If you have small children, an illustrated story Bible will help retain their attention.
10. **Fathers should lead.** In the Bible, God specifically calls fathers to instruct their children about Him.

The Beginners Family Worship Handbook

A simple guide for starting family devotions in your home.

Part 3: Sample plans for family devotions

To illustrate **Read – Pray – Sing**, I've created these simple plans for family worship. You can use these as written to *get started*, or change the order to fit your family.

I've includes the scriptures below, but during worship, you should read directly from a family member's Bible.

Sample #1

<p>Read: Luke 6:46-59 (46) "Why do you call me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do what I tell you? (47) Everyone who comes to me and hears my words and does them, I will show you what he is like: (48) he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when a flood arose, the stream broke against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built. (49) But the one who hears and does not do them is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. When the stream broke against it, immediately it fell, and the ruin of that house was great."</p> <p>Discuss: What is the point Jesus is making?</p>	<p>Sing: Jesus loves me! This I know, For the Bible tells me so; Little ones to Him belong; They are weak, but He is strong.</p> <p>* Refrain: Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so.</p> <p>Jesus loves me! He who died Heaven's gate to open wide; He will wash away my sin, Let His little child come in.</p> <p>(Refrain)</p> <p>Jesus loves me! He will stay Close beside me all the way; Thou hast bled and died for me, I will henceforth live for Thee.</p>
<p>Pray: Father takes requests from the children and then prays for them by name.</p>	<p>(Refrain)</p>

Sample #2

The Beginners Family Worship Handbook

A simple guide for starting family devotions in your home.

<p>Read: Ephesians 6:1-4 (1) Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. (2) "Honor your father and mother" (this is the first commandment with a promise), (3) "that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land." (4) Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.</p> <p>Q: What is the promise God makes for children?</p>	<p>Pray: Children pray in turn asking God to help them obey. Parents then thank God for the children.</p> <p>Sing: "You are always with me" track #3 on <i>Awesome God</i></p>
--	--

Sample #3

<p>Read: "God makes a way" page 92 ff in <i>The Jesus Storybook Bible</i></p> <p>Q: What does this story say about God?</p>	<p>Pray: Everyone prays for one another silently for 60 seconds and then a parent prays aloud to finish the prayer time.</p>
<p>Sing: My God is so big, so strong and so mighty, there's nothing my God cannot do. My God is so big, so strong and so mighty, there's nothing my God cannot do.</p> <p>The mountains are his, the rivers are his, the stars are His handiwork, too. My God is so great, so strong and so mighty, there's nothing my God cannot do, for you!</p>	

The Beginners Family Worship Handbook

A simple guide for starting family devotions in your home.

Part 4: Additional ideas for after you start

Once you establish a good pattern, you may want to add more variety and discussion to your family devotions.

Ask the one big question. After reading a bible passage, ask the one big question, “*What does this say about God?*” This simple approach will turn any scripture reading into a learning discussion.

Ask the second big question. After you have determined what the scripture reading says about God, you can move to the second big question, “*How does God want me to respond?*” This moves from knowledge about God to obedience to God’s Word.

Use a child’s catechism. Parents and churches have always used a simple Q & A format to teach Bible truth to children (and new Christians). In children’s church, we refer to these as “Little Questions.” I have printed copies available in my office of the questions we use.

The Beginners Family Worship Handbook

A simple guide for starting family devotions in your home.

Key Themes to Teach Children About God

From Bethlehem Baptist Church, Minneapolis

<http://www.hopeingod.org/KeyBibleThemestoTeachChildren.aspx>

- **GOD IS THE ONE TRUE GOD**
- **GOD MADE EVERYTHING**
(God is the Maker and Owner of all things.)
- **GOD IS GREATER THAN ANYONE**
(God is the greatest there is!)
- **GOD IS IN CHARGE OF EVERYTHING**
(He is the boss of everything)
- **GOD CAN DO ANYTHING**
(Nothing is too hard for God)
- **GOD DOESN'T NEED ANYTHING**
- **GOD IS HOLY**
(God has never sinned and never will sin... not even one time)
- **GOD IS EVERYWHERE**
- **GOD IS GOOD**
- **GOD NEVER CHANGES**
- **GOD IS FAITHFUL**
(He always does what He says He will do; God always keeps His promises)
- **GOD IS MERCIFUL**
(He is kind and loving)
- **GOD KNOWS EVERYTHING**
- **GOD IS JUST**
(God is right in all He does; God is "fair")
- **FAITH PLEASES GOD**
- **GOD COMMUNICATES WITH MAN**
(God speaks to us)
- **JESUS IS MY FRIEND**
- **JESUS/GOD HEARS US WHEN WE PRAY**

The Beginners Family Worship Handbook

A simple guide for starting family devotions in your home.

Biblical Encouragements To Family Worship

God's Word speaks directly about the duty of parents to lead their children in the worship. But this is more than a responsibility -- it is a sacred privilege. Leading devotions in your home will bless your children and create a legacy of God-centered joy.

Deuteronomy 6:4-9

(4) "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. (5) You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. (6) And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. (7) You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. (8) You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. (9) You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Ephesians 6:1-4

(1) Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. (2) "Honor your father and mother" (this is the first commandment with a promise), (3) "that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land." (4) Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

2 Timothy 3:14-15

(14) But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it (15) and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

The Beginners Family Worship Handbook

A simple guide for starting family devotions in your home.

Psalms 78:1-8

(1) Give ear, O my people, to my teaching; incline your ears to the words of my mouth! (2) I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings from of old, (3) things that we have heard and known, that our fathers have told us. (4) We will not hide them from their children, but tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the LORD, and his might, and the wonders that he has done. (5) He established a testimony in Jacob and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers to teach to their children, (6) that the next generation might know them, the children yet unborn, and arise and tell them to their children, (7) so that they should set their hope in God and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments; (8) and that they should not be like their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation, a generation whose heart was not steadfast, whose spirit was not faithful to God.

1 Peter 3:7

(7) Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.

Genesis 18:17-19

(17) The LORD said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do, (18) seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? (19) For I have chosen him, that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice, so that the LORD may bring to Abraham what he has promised him."