
Family Devotions

SKILL

Overview:

A family devotion is a regular time when you focus on your relationship with God as a family. This usually involves reading, discussing, and responding to God's word. Family devotions can also include many other experiences that will help grow your kids' relationship with God, i.e. family prayer, reading a Christian book, etc. Family devotions are a way that parents can pass on and teach the next generation the importance of God's word. Fathers should take the primary leadership role in planning and leading this time.

Outline:

- I. Benefits of family devotions
 - A. Develops godly convictions and values
 - B. Demonstrates the relevance of the Bible to everyday life
 - C. Demonstrates respect and appreciation for God's word
 - D. Demonstrates the father's leadership
 - E. Identifies wrong behavior and attitudes
 - F. Identifies desirable character qualities
 - G. Leads to salvation (2 Tim. 3:14-15)
 - II. Suggestions for quality family devotions
 - A. Consistency is essential for overall effectiveness
 1. It won't be easy
 2. You need to put it in your schedule
 3. Pick a time that works best for your family
 4. Start slow, don't over-commit
 5. You are in it for the long-run
 - B. Variety is essential to maintaining interest
 1. Pay attention to what your kids like
 - C. Make your devotions age appropriate
 1. Rotate what age you focus on
 2. Picture Bibles and read-aloud stories for toddlers.
 - a. Put actions to the verses
 3. Suggestions for older kids:
 - a. Read through Proverbs (skip mature topics, Ch 5-7).
 - b. Read age appropriate Christian books or biographies.
 - c. Use "One Year Book of Family Devotions" or other devotional.
 - d. Read Bible passage and ask each person what spoke to them.
 - e. Review their Sunday school lesson.
 4. Make use of all the resources available from a Christian bookstore.
 - D. Participation is essential for real learning to take place
 1. Don't lecture
 2. Ask relevant questions to draw out discussion.
 - E. Keep things moving
 1. Don't go too long
 - F. Take your devotions on the road
 - G. Help your kids with scripture memory
 - H. Establish family devotion traditions
 1. Use holidays to focus on Christ.
 - I. Establish a prayer time with your family
 1. Keep a family prayer list
 2. Start with the youngest
 3. Good time can be before bed
 - J. Sing together
 1. Use worship CD or cassette if you don't play guitar or piano.
 - K. Break bread together
 1. Do at a time when you can only involve kids who have accepted Christ.
 - L. Be real
 1. Share your life stories and experiences
 - M. Be spontaneous and open to God's spirit
- Conclusion:**
As fathers, we are responsible to spiritually lead our families. God has commanded us to wash our wives with the word and bring our children up in the training and instruction of the Lord. One way that we can accomplish this is by spending regular times together having family devotions.

Supporting Material:

Verses:

Deut 6:4-9 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. **Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.** Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

Psa 78:4-8 We will not hide them from their children; **we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD**, his power, and the wonders he has done. He decreed statutes for Jacob and established the law in Israel, which **he commanded our forefathers to teach their children, so the next generation would know them, even the children yet to be born, and they in turn would tell their children.** Then they would put their trust in God and would not forget his deeds but would keep his commands. They would not be like their forefathers-- a stubborn and rebellious generation, whose hearts were not loyal to God, whose spirits were not faithful to him.

Prov 1:1-9 The proverbs of Solomon son of David, king of Israel: for attaining wisdom and discipline; for understanding words of insight; for acquiring a disciplined and prudent life, doing what is right and just and fair; **for giving prudence to the simple, knowledge and discretion to the young--**let the wise listen and add to their learning, and let the discerning get guidance--for understanding proverbs and parables, the sayings and riddles of the wise. The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline. **Listen, my son, to your father's instruction and do not forsake your mother's teaching.** They will be a garland to grace your head and a chain to adorn your neck.

Prov 13:20 He who walks with the wise grows wise, but a companion of fools suffers harm.

Prov 22:6 **Train a child in the way he should go,** and when he is old he will not turn from it.

Prov 23:26 **My son, give me your heart** and let your eyes keep to my ways. . .

Isa 38:18-19 For the grave cannot praise you, death cannot sing your praise; those who go down to the pit cannot hope for your faithfulness. The living, the living-- they praise you, as I am doing today; **fathers tell their children about your faithfulness.**

Isa 54:13 **All your sons will be taught by the LORD,** and great will be your children's peace.

Joel 1:3 **Tell it to your children,** and let your children tell it to their children, and their children to the next generation.

Mal 2:15 Has not [the LORD] made them one? In flesh and spirit they are his. And why one?

Because **he was seeking godly offspring.** So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith with the wife of your youth.

Mal 4:5-6 "See, I will send you the prophet Elijah before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes. **He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children,** and the hearts of the children to their fathers; or else I will come and strike the land with a curse."

Matt 5:19 Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but **whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.**

Matt 18:1-6 At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" He called a little child and had him stand among them. And he said: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. "And whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me. But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.

Matt 18:19-20 "Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. **For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them.**"

Matt 19:13-15 Then little children were brought to Jesus for him to place his hands on them and pray for them. But the disciples rebuked those who brought them. Jesus said, **"Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."** When he had placed his hands on them, he went on from there.

Matt 21:15-16 But when the chief priests and the teachers of the law saw the wonderful things he did and the children shouting in the temple area, "Hosanna to the Son of David," they were indignant. "Do you hear what these children are saying?" they asked him. "Yes," replied Jesus, "have you never read, **"From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise"?**"

Luke 10:21 At that time Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit, said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because **you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children.** Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure.

Rom 10:17 Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.

Eph 6:4 Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, **bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.**

Eph 5:25-27 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, **cleansing her by the washing with water through the word,** and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.

1Thes 2:11-12 For you know that we dealt with each of you **as a father deals with his own children, encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God,** who calls you into his kingdom and glory.

2 Tim 3:14-17 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and **how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures,** which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

3 Jn 1:4 I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.

Quotes:

I would say to you, brethren, pity the son whose developing manhood has been impoverished by a negligent father who has not tutored him in the manly wisdom of Proverbs.

Pastor George McDearmon

Children learn first and best from their families. Just as by the end of the second year their language is that of the people with whom they live, so their behavior is stamped with the seal of their adult protectors. *Sadie Ginsberg*

By the time children are five, their parents will have done at least half of all that can ever be done to determine the children's future faith.

Randolph Miller

Life affords no greater responsibility, no greater privilege, than the raising of the next generation. *C. Everett Koop, M.D.*

Every child has a right to be well fed and well led. *Ruth Smelter*

I have learned more about Christianity from my mother than from all the theologians of England *John Wesley*

References:

Family Enrichment Conference Material, Great Commission International, 1988.

Gotta Be Real with Family Devotions, The Pastor's Family Magazine, Oct/Nov 1997, Dino & Melissa Roseland