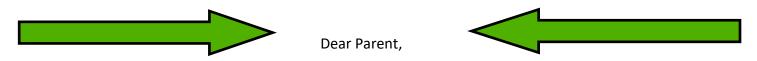


3...... What is Family Worship

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6...... Note from the Pastor



Every Christian parent wants to raise families who will grow up to love and trust Jesus. Parents deliberately search for the church that provides the most opportunities for their families to grow up in the Lord. We want Sovereign King Church to be that church!

We must not, however, neglect our homes—where our families see our faith on real-time display every day. According to the Bible, we parents have the primary responsibility for teaching our families about God. His word must be prominent in our conversation and daily life with our kids. Training our families in godliness is not something that we can put off until they're older.

In Deuteronomy 6:4-9, we read:

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.

The call to training our families in godliness is comprehensive. To summarize this passage, it is saying we, parents, have responsibility to teach our families during mealtime, drive time, bedtime, in the morning- the whole day through. The elders at Sovereign King Church recognize that we have a responsibility as a church to walk alongside parents as they train their families in godliness. We want to equip parents to pray and plan for the spiritual development of their families. We want to encourage you to begin to have a time of family worship throughout the week. In this guide, you will find out what family worship is and how to do it. It contains weekly bible readings, catechism questions, things to pray for, and song suggestions. It is our prayer that it will help you establish a family tradition that will bless you, your children, and generations yet to come.

WHAT IS FAMILY WORSHIP?

Family worship should be a priority in your home because the home is the training ground for biblical formation in the lives of your children. It is the responsibility of parents, and primarily of fathers, to provide Christian instruction in the home for the purpose of raising your children to know and fear the Lord.

Family worship is simply taking time as a family to worship God at home in a family setting. When a family gathers together at home for prayer, Bible reading, and turning their hearts to the Lord - that is family worship. It is also called family devotions. Unfortunately, few Christian adults today grew up in homes that practiced family worship. You may not have had this modeled for you growing up, and if you are like most Christian families today this has not been a regular part of your life.

There is good news! It is never too late to begin family worship - with teenagers, or with grandchildren. It is OK to start slowly. "Do not despise the day of small beginnings."

What should you do during Family Worship?

Keep it simple.

You don't have to replicate a church service. Simple consistency is far better than trying something complicated which you will give up. Remember, you will fail and have times where family worship is a struggle. Don't give up. Just ask God to help!



Consider including the following elements together during your family worship:

Read: Read a portion of the Bible together. If you have children who are old enough to read you can have them read aloud. Of course, you will want to help with any big words or concepts.

Discuss: After reading the Bible together, work through a simple process of examining what has been read. First, what did the passage say to the original readers? Second, what does the passage mean for all time? Third, how does this passage apply to us as individuals and as a family? You will want to ask questions and get everyone to participate in the discussion.

Sing: Yikes! Did you say singing? One of the ways that God invites us to worship Him is by singing. If your children are younger, and you are enthusiastic about it, they will love it, and you will lay the groundwork for singing in your family for generations to come. If your kids are all teenagers, and you have never tried singing together as a family, you may want to try this in a few months - after family worship has taken root. It can be helpful to use worship CDs or DVDs. Youtube.com works as well. We have a link to a family worship playlist at www.sellersburgkids.com

Catechism: It's a funny word but it just means question and answers. Christians throughout history have memorized catechism questions and answers to help learn the basics of the faith. In this guide we will include catechism questions for you to work on with your family. Every Sunday we will have a time to work on them together as a church.

Pray: End your family worship time with prayer. Let prayer become an important part of your home. Pray for your neighbors, your community, the nation, and the world.

March 7-13th

Bible Passage for the Week

Matthew 8:1-22

Isaiah 40

Verse to Memorize

Psalm 8:1-2

Catechism Questions

Q. 34. Did Adam act for himself alone in the covenant of works? A. No; he represented all his posterity.

Q. 35. What effect had the sin of Adam on all mankind? A. All mankind are born in a state of sin and misery.

Q. 36. What is that sinful nature which we inherit from Adam called? A. Original sin.

People to Pray for:

<u>Church:</u> <u>Trinity Presbyterian Church</u> Andrew Dionne

Ministry: Jason Chen

Chinese Reformed Church of

Bloomington

Magistrate: Rep John Jacob

Song Suggestion

Behold Our God

Psalm 23 The Lord is My Shepherd

Lead on O King Eternal

Notes to Help

Bible Passage for the Week

Matthew 8:1-22—The sermon this week was from verses 18-22. The theme was "Excuses." Ask your children what excuses they are tempted to make in order to disobey their parents? What excuses are you tempted to make so that you don't have to obey Jesus?

Isaiah 40 foretells of John the Baptist who came to prepare the way for Jesus. Isaiah 40 shows some of the message that John would be proclaiming about Jesus. Pay special attention to verse 9-11. What do these verses teach us about who Jesus is? Hint (He is God, He is Powerful, He is a Judge, and He is a Shepherd.)

Catechism Questions

You might tempted to think it is not fair that God represented you but if you were in Adams place you would have done the same or worse. Adam did represent us.

Remind your children that there is a new and better representative named Jesus. He stood in our place on the cross so that we might be reborn in a state of holiness and happiness.

The New England Primer, a textbook used in the founding of America had children memorize their Alphabet starting with letter A by saying: In Adam's fall, We sinned All."

People to Pray for:

If you click the links, they will take you to the home page of the church, ministry, or civil magistrate. Your children might like to see a picture of who they are praying for. A good homeschool or family project is to write a letter to one or more of these people letting them know they are being prayed for.

Song Suggestion

You can click on each song to listen and see the lyrics. One night this week pick a song and go through the lyrics with your children and explain what they mean. It always helps both adults and kids to know what they are singing. (Tip—Read Isaiah 40 when you sing the first two songs.)

March 14-20th

Bible Passage for the Week

Matthew 8:23-9:1

Isaiah 41

Verse to Memorize

Psalm 8:1-4

Catechism Questions

Q. 37. What does every sin deserve? A. The wrath and curse of God.

Q. 38. Can any one go to heaven with this sinful nature? A. No; our hearts must be changed before we can be fit for heaven.

Q. 39. What is a change of heart called? A. Regeneration.

Q. 40. Who can change a sinner's heart? A. The Holy Spirit alone.

People to Pray for:

<u>Church:</u> First Presbyterian Church Jasper
Pastor Joe Helt

Ministry: Andrew Halsey

Christ Church Columbus

Magistrate: Rep Curt Nisly

Song Suggestion*

Psalm 16 Fullness of Joy

What Wonderous Love is This

Let Your Kingdom Come

Notes to Help

Bible Passage for the Week

Matthew 8:23-9:1 What obstacles did Jesus 'disciples overcome to go across the Sea of Galilee? Why were they fearful? What opposition did Jesus experience in the land across the sea? Was it worth it for Jesus and His disciples to go through the storm? What obstacles do you face when trying to serve Jesus? How do you overcome fear?

Isaiah 41- Pay attention to verses 9-13. Have your children talk about what they afraid of. How does this passage help us overcome fear?

Catechism Questions

It is very important that you always remind yourself and your children that it is God who changes people. He is the one who saves us and makes us fit for heaven. We are not saved by our good deeds but by Christ's good deeds. We are changed by the Holy Spirit which Christ sends to us. We simply respond in faith. You can remind yourself of how Jesus saved the men who were demon possessed in Matthew 8. Jesus was the one who saved them, they could do nothing for themselves. Always remind your children that they are sinners who can't save themselves but that Jesus can and will save them. They must simply believe.

People to Pray for:

Christ Church Columbus is a new church plant of our Presbytery. Pray for Pastor Halsey as he gather believers and begin the process of establishing a new church. Pray for Pastor Helt as he works in Jasper to revitalize a church.

Song Suggestion

Focus on this line from Psalm 16:
With You beside me, God
I'm never shaken
My heart and flesh will dwell secure.

Jesus makes us secure. He sees us through the obstacles and opposition we face in life. With him, we have nothing to fear.

March 21- 27th

Bible Passage for the Week

Matthew 9:2-8

Isaiah 42

Verse to Memorize

Psalm 8:1-5

Catechism Questions

Q. 41. Can any one be saved through the covenant of works? A. None can be saved through the covenant of works.

Q. 42. Why can none be saved through the covenant of works? A. Because all have broken it, and are condemned by it

People to Pray for:

<u>Church: Christ Church Cincinnati</u> Pastor Joseph Bayly

Ministry: Pastor Jake Mentzel

Church of the King Evansville

Magistrate: Rep Steve Davisson

Song Suggestion*

O the Deep Deep Love of Jesus
Psalm 6 Lord, How Long
And Can it Be

Notes to Help

Bible Passage for the Week

Matthew 9:2-8. Something you try to always include in your family worship time is a time to confess sins and to seek forgiveness. Our passage reminds us that Jesus has authority to forgive sins. Our homes need to be a place where sin is not swept under the rug but rather where it is dealt with by the blood of Jesus.

Isaiah 42. Verses 1-9 speak of the majesty and power of Jesus. They were written years before Christ and yet foretell of how he would come to rule the nations and yet he would also be gentle with a bruised reed. What is a bruised reed? How is gentle with us as we are sinners?

Catechism Questions

Our catechism questions have been focused on the biblical teaching of covenants. Ligonier ministries has a good short article on the covenant of works that might be helpful to you. You can find it here. The concept of a covenant is a very important one in the bible and yet not many people have been taught it. You might be tempted to think this is too deep for your little ones. But remember that catechism questions are designed to help lay down foundations. They give your children a biblical and theological vocabulary. They give simple definitions, and principles that your children will be studying their whole life. You will be surprised what little ones are able to pick up so have faith for the long haul.

People to Pray for:

Christ Church Cincinnati is the next church in our Presbytery to be particularized. Pray for them as they begin to consider that process. Also pray for Pastor Jake as he plants a church in Evansville.

Song Suggestion

And Can it Be reminds us of the grace of God. In Jesus, sinners are forgiven, healed, and set free.

"Long my imprisoned spirit lay,
Fast bound in sin and nature's night;
Thine eye diffused a quick'ning ray—
I woke, the dungeon flamed with light;
My chains fell off, my heart was free,
I rose, went forth, and followed Thee."

March 28th- April 3rd

Bible Passage for the Week

Matthew 9:9-13

Isaiah 43

Verse to Memorize

Psalm 8:1-6

Catechism Questions

Q. Why did Jesus go to Jerusalem on Palm Sunday? A. To do the will of the Father, to fulfill prophesy, and to die for sinners.

Q. How did Jesus come into Jerusalem? A. He humbly rode on a donkey.

Q. What did the people dp when Jesus came into Jerusalem? A. They spread out palm branches and their coats along the road and shouted ""Hosanna to the Son of David; Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest.

Q. What does Hosanna mean? A. Please save us now.

People to Pray for:

Church: Holy Trinity Reformed Church
Pastor James Brown Jr.

Ministry: Evangel Presbytery

Magistrate: State Legislature

Song Suggestion

Psalm 9 Zion's Daughter

Psalm 24 King of Glory

Notes to Help

Bible Passage for the Week

Matthew 9:9-13. Whose does Jesus say he came for? What does it mean that he did not come for the healthy? Are there any who are truly healthy or only those who refuse to acknowledge that they are sick and need of his healing?

Isaiah 43:25 tells that God will wipe away sins and remember them no more. For whose glory does he do this? Who should get the glory for our salvation?

Catechism Questions

This week is set aside by many Christians to celebrate the entrance of Christ into Jerusalem, to remember his death and burial, and to rejoice in his resurrection. We ought to be constantly filling our home with reminders of this foundational story. Remember that Jesus came to save sinners. Our children will face temptations being raised in a Christian home to have a legalistic view of their own good deeds. They will be tempted to pride. They will be tempted to performance anxiety. This is because often the gospel is assumed. While it is good to teach the law of God, make sure that it is in the context of the gospel. Jesus came for the sick. He came for sinners. One way to keep the gospel focus is to make sure you constantly tell the Easter story and not just at Easter. Constantly speak of Christ's death burial, and resurrection. Constantly confess sin and seek forgiveness.

People to Pray for:

This week pray that God will give the churches of Evangel Presbytery love and affection for each other.

Pray God will add to our number.

Song Suggestion

This past Sunday, we celebrated Palm Sunday. Both of our songs point us to Christ's entrance into Jersualem as a humble king. This week as we look forward to Easter, be reminded that Christ is alive and will one day return the king full of glory. May our hearts be like the gates of Jerusalem mentioned in Psalm 24- Lift up, lift up your heads, you gates And the King of Glory shall come in Open, you everlasting doors

So that we may come and worship Him

How to use Catechisms

Exodus 6:20-21 "When your son asks you in time to come, saying, 'What do the testimonies and the statutes and the judgments mean which the Lord our God commanded you?' then you shall say to your son, 'We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt, and the Lord brought us from Egypt with a mighty hand.

Children are naturally inquisitive. From the time they can talk they are asking questions. What are we having for lunch? Why is it called lunch? Why is the sky blue? Why is blue blue? There are all kinds of questions that kids ask as they are discovering how the world works. Exodus 6:20-21 is one passage among many in the law of God that teaches parents to utilize their children's curiosity to teach deep truths. God is the one who hardwired humans to be curious and He did it so that we may learn about Him.

The Apostle Peter reminds Christians that they must be "ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you (1 Peter 3:15)." When others see how we practice our faith with such hope, they will have questions about the source of that hope that we should be ready to answer. Speaking of questions, our Lord Jesus himself also used questions to teach his disciples. Mark 8:28-30 says Jesus "continued by questioning them, 'But who do you say that I am?' Peter answered and said to Him, 'You are the Christ'"

Christians recognizing both how they should be ready to answer questions and how the use of questions is an important teaching tool have developed something called catechism. The word catechism comes from a Greek word that means "to teach orally." The word is used several times in scripture to speak about teaching the faith. Catechisms are tools often using question and answers for teaching the Christian faith. They are not limited to use with children, but they are a great way for deep and important truths to be broken down into digestible statements.

Martin Luther, the Protestant Reformer, was one of the first to write a catechism keeping small children in mind. He wrote this in the introduction to his catechism "Therefore it is the duty of every father of a family to question and examine his children and servants at least once a week and to ascertain what they know of it, or are learning and, if they do not know it, to keep them faithfully at it." Because of Luther's catechism questions, it was said that in the days following him that a girl or boy of 15 years old knew more about the faith than all the great theologians of the universities. John Tillotson, England's Archbishop of Canterbury from 1691 to 1694, said that "catechizing and the history of the martyrs have been the two great pillars of the Protestant Religion."

How to use Catechisms

Ok, so now you know what a catechism is and have some idea what it is supposed to do. How do you use a catechism with your family?

1.First you pick out a catechism to use. Our church has three catechisms that we use as a church.

a. The Shorter and Larger Westminster Catechisms.

These were written in the 1640s to be used by the Presbyterian and Reformed churches on England and Scotland. The Larger Catechism has more thorough answers and was meant for Pastors while the Shorter catechism was written to be used with families. These catechisms along with the Westminster Confession of faith are part of the governing documents of our church.

b. The Sovereign King Family Catechism

This is a simplified version of the catechisms mentioned above that includes some additional questions and answers on topics such as the family, biblical masculinity and feminity, and the order of worship. This is the <u>catechism</u> found in the family worship guide.

- 2. Pick a time to work on Catechism questions. If your children are old enough to talk, they can work on these questions and answers. This does not take a lot of extra time. A great time to work on it is just to add it to your family worship routine. Family worship does not need to be long and drawn out. Sing a song, read a bible passage, have the kids recite the question and answer a couple of times from the catechism, give a brief thought from your bible passage or catechism, and then pray. Depending on the age of your children, family worship can be as brief as ten minutes. If you homeschool, you can make the catechism questions apart of the curriculum. Have the kids not only memorize the questions but look up the answers in their bibles. Bedtime is another great opportunity to work on catechism questions. Pick one or two questions a week and have them say them before you tuck them in and kiss them goodnight. It only takes a few seconds, but it will really help with memorization.
- **3.** Consistency and memorization are the keys. Remember that there is a long-term plan in mind. You do not have to give lectures on each question, nor do you need to worry that there might be some hard concept that your littlest ones do not understand. Part of learning anything is building up a vocabulary on the subject.

Continued on next page

How to use Catechisms

Have your children work on memorizing the questions and answers even if they cannot fully grasp the concept will help them develop a vocabulary. It will help them develop a foundation upon which to build. As the children grow in maturity then you move from memorization to being able to talk about the concepts in greater ways. Then you look not only for recitation but communication of the concepts. The key to this is consistency. Try to establish some schedule some rhythm to your teaching. It is better to pick one or two times that are the same every week and are set in stone to do catechism time, then to do it every day one week and then not do it for a month. Slow and steady as she goes.

- **4. Repeat and Review-** Repetition helps lock in the memory. As your children memorize the catechism questions and you move on to new ones, from time to time come back and go over the old ones.
- **5. Have faith.** God has given you this responsibility to teach your children. You are showing them the wonderful truths of God and preparing them to be able to give a defense of the hope of Christ. Have faith in Jesus. He is the one who must work to save your children. Rest in him. Pray often for your children. Pray that God would use the catechism time to build a lasting foundation that will carry your children throughout their lives.

In conclusion, we are commanded by God to teach each other the faith. We are commanded to teach our children. Getting their already inquisitive minds engaged through Catechism is a great tool that will have lasting benefit.

Palm Sunday

When they had approached Jerusalem and had come to Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, "Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied *there* and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to Me. If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord has need of them,' and immediately he will send them." This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet:

"SAY TO THE DAUGHTER OF ZION,

'BEHOLD YOUR KING IS COMING TO YOU,

GENTLE, AND MOUNTED ON A DONKEY,

EVEN ON A COLT, THE FOAL OF A BEAST OF BURDEN."

The disciples went and did just as Jesus had instructed them, and brought the donkey and the colt, and laid their coats on them; and He sat on the coats. Most of the crowd spread their coats in the road, and others were cutting branches from the trees and spreading them in the road. The crowds going ahead of Him, and those who followed, were shouting,

"Hosanna to the Son of David;
BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD;
Hosanna in the highest!"

When He had entered Jerusalem, all the city was stirred, saying, "Who is this?" And the crowds were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth in Galilee."

And Jesus entered the temple and drove out all those who were buying and selling in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who were selling doves. And He *said to them, "It is written, 'MY HOUSE SHALL BE CALLED A HOUSE OF PRAYER'; but you are making it a ROBBERS' DEN."

And the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them. But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that He had done, and the children who were shouting in the temple, "Hosanna to the Son of David," they became indignant and said to Him, "Do You hear what these children are saying?" And Jesus *said to them, "Yes; have you never read, 'OUT OF THE MOUTH OF INFANTS AND NURSING BABIES YOU HAVE PREPARED PRAISE FOR YOUR-SELF'?" And He left them and went out of the city to Bethany, and spent the night there.

Matthew 21:1-17

