



# **FAMILY WORSHIP GUIDE**

COVENANT LIFE CHURCH

# CARE

## a note from our pastors

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God gives many good gifts to families, perhaps none of which is greater than the responsibility and joy of shepherding our children to know and understand their great need for Jesus. We are committed to a discipleship model for children that places premiums on the home, strong marriages, and healthy parenting relationships. Toward that end, we are in regular prayer for you and your children. It is our great desire that you would rejoice in making much of God with your family through all of life's joys and pains, times of peace, and seasons of sorrow.

We are told that God commanded the nation of Israel in Deuteronomy 6:4-9 to "Hear...the LORD our God, the LORD is one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command to you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children and you 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. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates."

Through His plan of redemption, God is creating a people who will glorify and enjoy Him forever. God's design is that His people would live in the grace He has given them by reading, discussing, reflecting upon, and obeying His word. The Christian family should be no different. Paul echoed the same sentiment in Ephesians 6:4, instructing fathers to bring up their children in "discipline and instruction of the Lord," and again in Titus 2:3-5, teaching that motherhood is a high and honorable calling with extraordinary responsibilities – to love one's own husband, nurture one's own children, and serve one's own family.

One of Covenant Life's values is the family. Our commitment as elders is to equip and shepherd the church so that, in turn, the parents among us can shepherd their children with the truth of the gospel. The gospel has the power to redeem even entire households, shape the future of the church, and even transform entire cities. Because we know this to be true, it's our hope that this prayer of the puritans would soak the walls in every Christ-following home...

"Sanctify and prosper my domestic devotion,  
instruction, discipline, example,  
that my house may be a nursery for heaven,  
my church the garden of the Lord,  
enriched with trees of righteousness of  
Thy planting, for Thy glory."

We're praying for the day to come when the gospel will not only go forth from our lips, but also from the lips of our children. O, that we would be faithful as parents so that we might see our children bask in the greatness, majesty, and glory of the gospel of our God!

# CREATE family worship

“Having your family in a Christ-exalting, gospel-centered, Bible-teaching local church is crucial to Christian parenting. But it is not enough for conveying to your family all you want to teach them about God and your beliefs. This is why family worship is so important. But even more importantly, God deserves to be worshiped by our families.” – Don Whitney, Family Worship

## SING

Here are some ideas to help you worship God through singing together as a family. These are designed to implant biblical truth in you and your children.

### USE A HYMNAL

Letting kids pick a hymn to sing as a family is a great way to teach them sound doctrine. Even if it doesn't sound perfect, the point is to sing praise to God.



### MAKE MUSIC

Not a musician? Can't hold a tune? Leading your family in singing is still a powerful expression of devotion to God and faith in Him.



### A FAMILY SONGBOOK

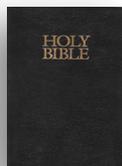
Save your bulletin each week and begin to learn the songs your church sings as a family. This can help prepare your children for worship with the whole congregation.

## PRAY

Praying together as a family expresses trust, repentance, and dependency upon God for all things. Here are some ways you can worship by praying as a family...

## READ

These are resources to help you lead your family to worship God through reading His word.



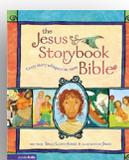
### THE BIBLE

Age range: **All ages.** Read a Psalm or short passage each day as a family. Study Bibles can be great resources for older kids.



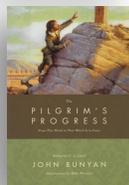
### THE GARDEN, THE CURTAIN, AND THE CROSS

Age range: **2-5.** Our relationship with God was severed in the Garden of Eden, but restored by Jesus. The short story illustrates how God welcomes us back in through the work of His Son.



### THE JESUS STORYBOOK BIBLE

Age range: **2-8.** This takes readers through the Bible, tracing the history of redemption by showing how Jesus is the culmination of God's "secret rescue plan."



### THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS: DELUXE ILLUSTRATED EDITION

Age range: **6-adult.** Perhaps the greatest book ever written outside of Scripture, this classic introduces a Christian understanding of the joys and sorrows of life this side of heaven.

## WHAT TO PRAY

- Pray for an unreached people group.
- Pray through the member directory.
- Pray for lost friends, family, classmates, etc.
- Pray for each person in the room.
- Have each child pray; encourage and teach them.
- Reflect on how God answers your family's prayers.

# CULTIVATE

## disciple-making ideas

God's design is for parents to be the primary disciplers of their children. Perhaps you've struggled to find ways to guide your children in an understanding of God, the Bible, prayer, and caring for one another. You're not alone! Here are some ways for you to disciple your family daily, weekly, and monthly.

## SHEPHERDING TIPS

- Talk to your children and/or grandchildren about their hearts.
  - Ask them: How are you doing? How can I pray for you?
- Invest time in being prepared to answer their tough questions and shepherd them through difficult struggles.
- Be transparent and humble with your children. When you don't know the answer, reiterate your commitment to searching for answers with them.
- Talk about biblical truth and your own life.
- Pray for your child.
- Model faith and faithfulness, morality, and values in front of your children.

## WEEKLY

- Prioritize intentional involvement in the gathering, CLI, CLK, and CG.
- Discuss the sermon, CLK lesson, songs that were sung, memory verses, catechism questions, etc.

## MONTHLY

### 1-on-1 time

Schedule 1-on-1 time with each of your children and focus on studying a book of the Bible, reviewing catechism questions, confessing sin, praying with one another, and/or memorizing Scripture.

### recommended books

Thoughts to Make Your Heart Sing (ages 2-6)

The Biggest Story (ages 2-10)

Everything a Child Should Know About God (ages 4-8)

New City Catechism (ages 4-adult)



### questions to ask

How does this story show Jesus as the hero?  
What does this story/text teach us about God?  
What does this story teach us about ourselves and others?  
Are there any commands to obey?  
Is there anything this teaches me to believe or not to believe?

### setting

Choose a park, coffee shop, or a quiet room in the house. Make it special, a unique place for you to meet to discuss these things. Engage them with questions, and encourage them to ask their own questions. Give them plenty of room to talk.

# CONTINUE

## discipling others

It's critical to remember that when we disciple our kids, we're teaching them to both KNOW the gospel and GO with the gospel. The hope is that our children observe all that Jesus has commanded and help others to do the same. Here are some ideas to help you steer your kids toward making disciples in their normal rhythms of life.

### PRAY



As you pray with your children, pray specifically for those in your life who do not know Jesus to repent and believe in Him.



Pray for opportunities to share the gospel with friends, family, classmates, and those in your social circles.



Have your children pray for their unbelieving friends at their schools, on their teams, and even in other families at their church.

### GIVE

- As a family, budget money to give to missions.
- Help your children find creative ways to earn extra money for special missions offerings.
- Encourage your children to sacrifice a birthday or Christmas present to support missions instead.
- Help your kids see the need for the gospel in their own neighborhood. Help them deliver some cookies to a neighbor to begin relationships with the intention of one day sharing the gospel with them.

### GO

- Show your children how extra-curricular activities can provide ample opportunity for gospel witness and engagement (sports, music, dance, etc.).
- Instead of a family vacation, plan a family mission trip.
- Take family walks around the neighborhood praying and finding opportunities to share the gospel.
- See your home as a mission field. Invite your kids to have friends over who need to hear the gospel.



# NOTES

on family worship

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**Deuteronomy 6:4-9**