

5 Antidotes to Boring Family Worship

I'm a big believer in family worship. I believe God has clearly called parents to intentionally teach their children the ways of God.

But for some, the idea of family worship is a bit scary. Either they don't know how to do it or they think it means three hours every night of exegetical study through Leviticus.

But family worship doesn't have to be scary or boring or a drudgery. It can be simple.

Here are five ways we do it:

1. Around the Table.

Sometimes we do it at dinner, other times we do it at breakfast (especially if I'm home for those meals). We usually use some kind of tool.

In the past, we've used the *Jesus StoryBook Bible* by Sally Lloyd Jones, a book every Christian parent should own ([in my opinion](#)). Right now, we are using an excellent book, *Proverbs for Kids*. This terrific book takes a proverb and offers some practical spiritual truth applicable to kids. It doesn't take very long, and it always includes a relatable story.

We decided to do Proverbs because we just felt our kids needed some relational wisdom during this season of their lives. I also highly recommend *New City Catechism*, by The Gospel Coalition. There are other really good resources out there for children as well.

When we do this around the table, it's very informal.

I usually read some Scripture and do some explanation, then I ask the kids questions about it. Sometimes we laugh, sometimes we joke. After we are done, we usually offer a prayer.

But we're very intentional about teaching our kids about the Scriptures. The table is a great place to do it. We are all gathered, we're enjoying God's good provision of food and the grace of conversation. I think it's important for families to share as many meals together as they can.

2. With a Hymnal or Singing.

We don't do this as often as we do the above, but every so often I will reach over and grab a hymnal and we'll sing some songs together as a family. It can be really fun.

What I love about the hymns is that they ground spiritual truth into the hearts of our children. We also like to listen to good Christian music in the car or at home.

Sometimes words will come up, especially with hymns, that need explanation. This is a great way to share with our kids some good ideas and truth.

3. In Everyday Life Situations.

I love Moses' instructions to the parents of Israel to teach God's truth whenever their kids "sit down" and "rise" ([Deut 6:7](#); [11:19](#)). I don't think this is a legalistic exercise. I think it is simply telling parents to use every opportunity that comes up, in daily life, to point to Jesus.

We really try to do this, and you'll be surprised by the really cool conversations that come up. As a parent, you don't have to do this in a scolding, lecture-type way. You can be fun, witty and conversational.

But daily life presents golden opportunities for conversations about the gospel, about the character of God. And we've observed that sometimes these are more formative than the structured, sit-down type of things we do.

Our kids need to know that all of life is God's, not just the space we reserve for him on Sunday. This is God's world and we live in it, to worship and glorify him.

4. Before Bed.

We have some of our greatest conversations before bed. Well, at least on the nights we are not getting to bed late and just trying to get to bed ourselves! But many nights, we're able to do a lot of praying. We try to have each kid pray to God, to get used to that idea.

It can be a bit chaotic to keep the kids from messing around during prayer. But there are some moments where you hear your kid pray an incredibly honest, beautiful, heart-warming prayer to the Lord. And you, also, can model prayer when you pray in front of your children.

We also try to pray for at least one missionary every night. We've had stretches where we've slacked on this a bit, but we try to get back to doing it. We also ask our kids, "So, who do you think we need to pray for tonight."

5. With Reading Literature.

This may be a bit of a stretch, since reading books other than the Bible may not technically be "family worship," but it is part of teaching. We try to expose our kids to some good reading, both classics and biographies.

And as we're reading, we try to share and explain Christian themes and concepts. We're also fortunate that our homeschooling curriculum is heavy on literature. So my oldest daughter, Grace, has already read several missionary biographies. Parents can do this in a variety of ways, but it's really helpful, I think, for kids to hear good stories and expand their wisdom and knowledge of God's world.

Bottom Line: Our family doesn't do worship perfectly and I'm sure there are better ways, resources, etc. Every family has to figure out what works best for them. However, we should all strive to be intentional with our kids' spiritual education.

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