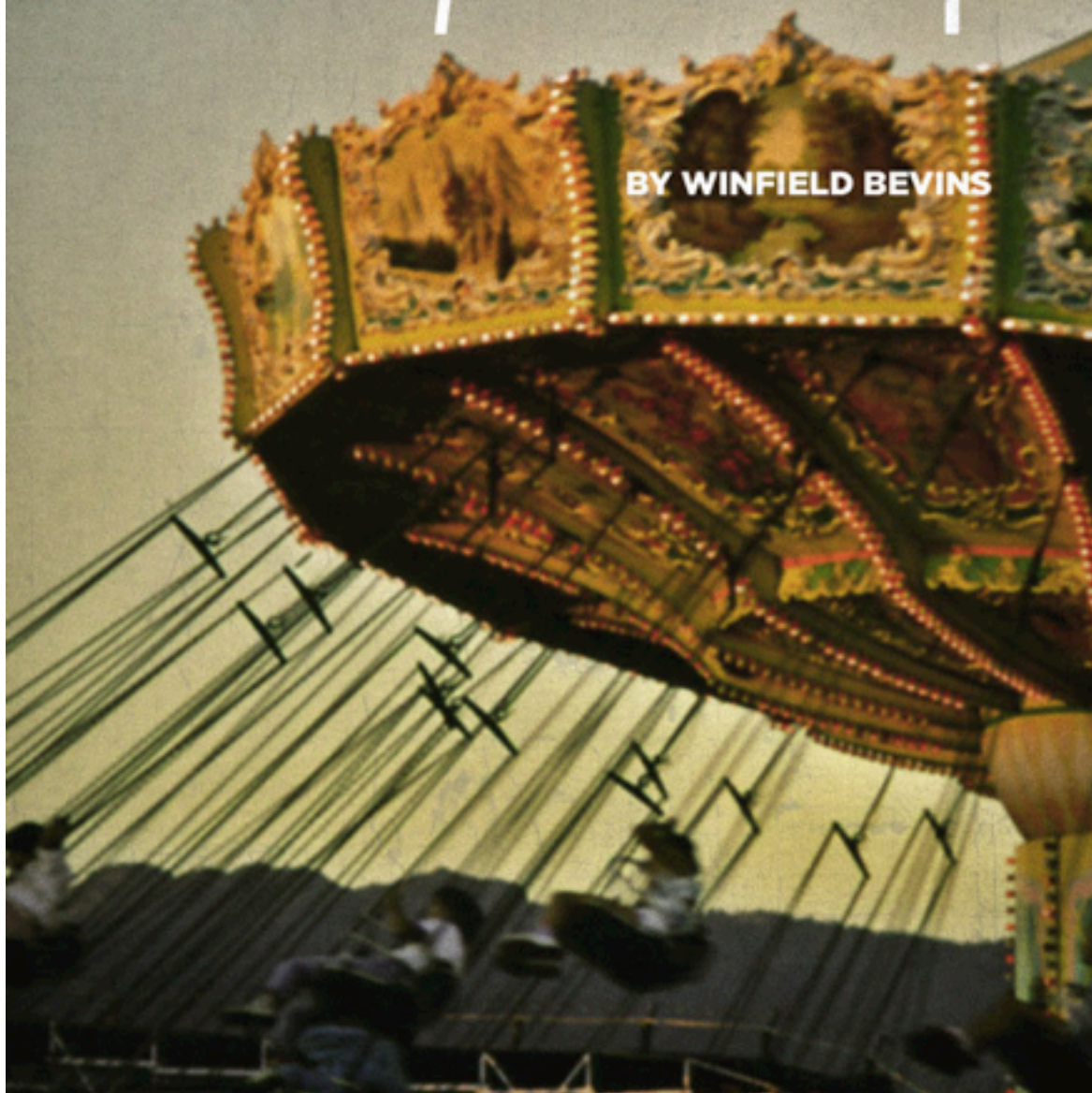


A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO:

Family Worship

BY WINFIELD BEVINS



A Beginners Guide to Family Worship

By Winfield Bevins

GCD Books is the publishing branch of Gospel Centered Discipleship.com. GCD exists to promote discipleship resources that help make, mature, and multiply disciples of Jesus.

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*To the families of
Church of the Outer Banks.
It is a joy to raise our children
together in the faith.*

INTRODUCTION

*“Every Christian family ought to be as it were a little church.”
-Jonathan Edwards*

The fact that you are reading this means that you are interested in family worship. Perhaps you are even a little cautious as well. You’re not alone. Evangelicals are beginning to rediscover the great blessing of family worship. Family worship is simply coming together as a family and worshipping God in the home. In the same way we come together for a time of corporate worship in the church, we also come together in the home for a time of family worship that involves prayer, reading scripture, and singing songs.

I admit that it may seem a little intimidating at first, but don’t let it be. The key is to start small and finish big. It’s worth it because your children really do want to know about God. The truth is your home is like a little church. Christian parents can lead their home in family worship. It’s really not that hard. Teaching your kids about your faith and sharing in a time of family worship isn’t just for trained theologians or pastors with kids. It’s for all of us, including single parents, working parents, and parents who are new to the faith. Trust me, if my wife and I can do it, you can do it too.

I want to offer a brief introduction to family worship by a guy who wasn’t raised in church or a tradition that practiced family worship. I have had to learn about it the hard way: trial and error. In fact, I am still learning about it and I don’t have it all together. I have an amazing wife and two incredible little girls. I am also the pastor of a church with many young families with small children. Many of these young families are new to the faith and were not raised in church themselves. One of my biggest challenges is helping them integrate their faith in the home.

Don’t Leave it Up to the Church

Many Christians believe that it is the church’s responsibility to raise their children in the faith. Too often, people think that the church is more like a baby-sitting service to watch our kids for a few hours a week. Nothing could be further from the truth. While church is important, the Bible tells us that the home is the primary place of learning the Bible and giving moral instruction. More than ever, it is time for us to step back and rethink the importance and value of worship in the home.

The call to “make disciples” begins in our homes first. It is our spiritual responsibility as parents, to teach our children about the faith. The Bible tells parents “Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it” (Proverbs 22:6). As Christian parents, we should desire for our children to have a firm foundation and grow up to love Jesus and know what the Bible says about their lives.

The Bible tells us that the home is the primary place to learn the Bible and receive moral instruction. In Deuteronomy 6:4-9, we read:

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 you today shall be on your heart. 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. 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.

This passage offers us a paradigm for raising our children in the faith and being missional families. Faith is not just something that we do once a week, but should be incorporated into the daily routines of the home. We should have a regular time to teach our faith to our children. We schedule what is most important to us. If you don't plan a time to teach your children, it will most likely not happen.

We should find moments to talk about our faith throughout the day with our families. How do we spend our time? Watching TV, playing video games, or shopping? Sadly, many families devote more time to these things than they do teaching their children about God, or just simply spending quality time together. There are teachable moments to share our faith with our children throughout each day. The problem is we are too busy to take advantage of them.

We should walk out our faith in the real world as an example to our children. The home is where faith learning begins, but the real world is where it is lived. Take time to stop and teach your children faith lessons in the car, at the grocery store, or the street corner. Christianity isn't just about knowing God, but living for Him. Children want a real faith that they connect to and live out.

Using This Study

This little book has been prepared as an introduction to family worship and to help you teach your children basic Christian beliefs and to memorize Scripture. This can be both fun and educational. The first section has short scriptures for you to learn with your children. The next section has longer passages such as the Ten Commandments and the 23rd Psalm. There is a sample Catechism for Boys and Girls with questions and answers that will help you learn basic Christian doctrine with your children. Lastly, there is a list of family prayers and songs that can be used at various times of the day.

Here are a few practical ideas that may help you use this study in the home:

1. Find a good children's Bible, such as *My First Bible*, *The Adventure Bible for Young readers*, or the *ESV Children's Bible*. Children love to have their own Bible that they can call their own.
2. Have a daily time for family worship (morning, afternoon, or evening). Develop a routine for your child. Consistency is good for learning. It will show your child that this is an important part of the day.
3. Remember to have fun with your children while learning the Bible. Memorizing and learning about the Bible doesn't have to be boring. Make the time fun and special.
4. Keep the time brief to hold the child's attention.

5. Recite a verse or question several times a day in your child's presence so it becomes familiar to them. It usually takes repeating something several times before you learn it.
6. You can make flash cards with Scripture on one side and the book, chapter, and verse on the other. Your child can carry them around with them.
7. Put the verse to music or to a rhythm. Your child will enjoy singing and clapping their hands.
8. Think of fun activities to make the verse fun and easy to remember. Be creative. Specialize your learning time in a way that is unique to you and your child.
9. Reward your child when he/she has accurately memorized a verse. Rewards could include small treats or prizes, a trip to the dollar store, or special time with mom or dad.
10. Tell them you are proud of them and have them recite it to someone else like a grandparent or teacher. Children love to share what they have learned.
11. Date each step as your child memorizes a scripture of one of the catechism questions. This will help you and your child chart their progress.
12. Pray with your children every day at meals and before they go to bed at night. Let prayer become an important part of your home.

Conclusion

I invite you and your family to discover the blessing of family worship. There is a revolution that is happening in the church today and it begins in the home. It starts in our marriages, by loving our spouses with the love of Christ. It happens by teaching, loving, and disciplining our children with the gospel. When we bring the gospel back in the home, it will spread through our neighborhoods and into the communities where we live. If every family in every church got serious about making disciples in the home, it would change our world. Begin the journey with your family today by using this little book as a guide to help you incorporate your faith into the daily routines of your family.

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION

Learning the Bible is an essential to being a Christian. This section begins with simple Scriptures to memorize with small children and then progresses to offer more advanced passages for older group levels. This is also an ideal practice for parents to memorize along with your children as well.

Genesis 1:1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

Date_____

Psalms 118:24 This is the day the Lord has made; Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Date_____

Psalms 119:105 Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.

Date_____

Psalms 136:1 Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.

Date_____

Luke 6:31 Do to others as you would have them do to you.

Date_____

Philippians 4:13 I can do everything through Him who gives me strength.

Date_____

Psalms 23:1 The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want.

Date_____

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son.

Date_____

John 8:12 Jesus said, "I am the light of the world."

Date_____

Matthew 22:37 Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.

Date_____

Matthew 22:39 And Love your neighbor as yourself.

Date_____

Ephesians 6:1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.

Date_____

I Peter 5:7 Cast all your cares on him because he cares for you.

Date_____

Psalms 19:14 May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.

Date_____

Psalms 139:14 I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.

Date_____

Matthew 1:21 She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus because he will save his people from their sins.

Date_____

Matthew 7:7 Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.

Date_____

Matthew 28:19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Date_____

John 1:1-2 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning.

Date_____

John 14:1 Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me.

Date_____

Ephesians 4:32 Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

Date_____

Psalms 19:1 The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands.

Date_____

I John 4:7-8 Let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God.

Date_____

Proverbs 3:5-6 Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.

Date_____

Isaiah 40:31 But those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.

Date_____

Matthew 7:7-8 Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.

Date_____

John 10:14 I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me.

Date_____

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

Date_____

23rd PSALM

The LORD is my shepherd,
I shall not want.
He makes me lie down in green pastures,
he leads me beside quiet waters,
he restores my soul.
He guides me in paths of righteousness
for his name's sake.
Even though I walk through the valley
of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil, for you are with me;
your rod and your staff, they comfort me.
You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies.
You anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.
Surely goodness and mercy will follow me
all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

Date_____

BENEDICTION

The LORD bless you and keep you;
the LORD make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you;
the LORD lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace.
Numbers 6:24-26

Date_____

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us,
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever.

Date_____

TEN COMMANDMENTS

1. You shall have no other gods before me.
2. You shall not make for yourself any carved image.
3. You shall not take the Lord's name in vain.
4. Remember the Sabbath and keep it holy.
5. Honor your father and mother.
6. You shall not commit murder.
7. You shall not commit adultery.
8. You shall not steal.
9. You shall not bear false witness.
10. You shall not covet.

Date_____

TWELVE DISCIPLES

Simon Peter
Andrew
James
John
Philip
Thomas
Matthew
James the Son of Alphaeus
Thaddaeus
Simon
Judas and Bartholomew

Date_____

DOXOLOGY

Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Date _____

APOSTLE'S CREED

I believe in God the Father almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth;
And in Christ Jesus, his only Son, our Lord;
Who was conceived of the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, buried; the third day he rose from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and
sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come and judge the living
and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Date _____

FAMILY CATECHISM

A catechism is a process of instructing believers both young and old in the basics of the Christian faith by using simple questions and answers accompanied by Biblical support and explanations. Use these questions and answers to help your children learn basics of the faith.

1.Q. Who made you?

A. God made me (Gn 1:26, 27; 2:7; Ec 12:1; Acts 17:24-29).

Date_____

2.Q. What else did God make?

A. God made all things (Gn 1, esp. verses 1, 31; Acts 14:15; Rm 11:36; Col 1:16).

Date_____

3.Q. Why did God make you and all things?

A. For his own glory (Ps 19:1; Jer 9:23, 24; Rv 4:11; 4:15).

Date_____

4.Q. How can you glorify God?

A. By loving him and doing what he commands (Ec 12:13; Mk 12:29-31; In 15:8-10; 1 Cor 10:31).

Date_____

5.Q. Why ought you to glorify God?

A. Because he made me and takes care of me (Rm 11:36; Rv 4:11; cf. Dan 4:39).

Date_____

6.Q. Are there more gods than one?

A. There is only one God (Deut 6:4; Jer 10:10; Mk 12:29; Acts 17:22-31).

Date_____

7.Q. In how many persons does this one God exist?

A. In three persons (Mt 3:16, 17; Jn 5:23; 10:30; 14:9, 10; 15:26; 16:13-15; 1 In 5:20, 2 In 9; Rv 1:4, 5).

Date_____

8.Q. Who are they?

A. The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit (Mt 28:19; 2 Cor 13:14; 1 Pet 1:2; Jude 20, 21).

Date_____

9.Q. Who is God?

A. God is a Spirit, and does not have a body like men (Jn 4:24; 2 Cor 3:17; 1 Tim 1:17).

Date_____

10.Q. Where is God?

A. God is everywhere (Ps 139:7-12; Jer 23:23,24; Acts 17:27,28).

Date_____

11.Q. Can you see God?

A. No. I cannot see God, but he always sees me (Ex 33:20; Jn 1:18; 1 Tim 6:16; Ps 139 esp. vv. 1-5; Pr 5:21; Hb 4:12, 13).

Date_____

12.Q. Does God know all things?

A. Yes. Nothing can be hidden from God (1 Chron 28:9; 2 Chron 16:9; Lk 12:6, 7; Rm 2:16).

Date_____

13.Q. Can God do all things?

A. Yes. God can do all his holy will (Ps 147:5; Jer 32:17; Dan 4:34, 35; Eph 1:11).

Date_____

14. Who is Jesus Christ?

A. Jesus Christ is the Son of God our Lord (John 3:16).

Date_____

15.Q. What is the Bible?

A. The Bible is God's Word (Job 11:7; Ps 119:104; Is 8:20; Mt 22:29; 2 Tim 3:15-17).

Date_____

16.Q. Who wrote the Bible?

A. Holy men who were taught by the Holy Spirit (1 Pet 1:20, 21; Acts 1:16; 2 Tim 3:16; 1 Pet 1:10, 11).

Date_____

FAMILY PRAYERS & SONGS

Praying and singing songs to God is an important part of practicing our faith. This section contains several simple prayers and songs for you and your children to learn together as a family.

A Child's Grace

God is great and God is Good,
And we thank God for our food;
By God's hand we must be fed,
Give us Lord, our daily bread. Amen.

A Child's Prayer for Morning

Now, before I run to play,
Let me not forget to pray
To God who kept me through the night
And waked me with the morning light.
Help me, Lord, to love thee more
Than I ever loved before,
In my work and in my play
Be thou with me through the day.
Amen.

God Hear My Prayer

God in heaven hear my prayer,

keep me in thy loving care.

Be my guide in all I do,

Bless all those who love me too.

Amen.

A Child's Evening Hymn

I hear no voice, I feel no touch,

I see no glory bright;

But yet I know that God is near,

In darkness as in light.

God watches ever by my side,

And hears my whispered prayer:

A God of love for a little child

Both night and day does care.

Child's Prayer

Dear God most high, hear and bless

Thy beasts and singing birds:

And guard with tenderness

Small things that have no words.

For Happy Hearts

We thank Thee Lord, for happy hearts,

For rain and sunny weather.

We thank Thee, Lord, for this our food,

And that we are together.

Children's Bedtime Prayer

Now I lay me down to sleep,

I pray the Lord my soul to keep:

May God guard me through the night

And wake me with the morning light.

Amen.

Jesus loves me!

Jesus loves me

This I know,

For the Bible tells me so;

Little ones to Him belong;

They are weak but He is strong.

Yes, Jesus loves me!

Yes, Jesus loves me!

Yes, Jesus loves me!

The Bible tells me so.

Jesus loves the little children

Jesus loves the little children
All the children of the world;
Red and yellow, black and white,
They are precious in his sight;
Jesus loves the little children of the world.

Jesus died for all the children,
All the children of the world; Red and yellow,
black and white,
They are precious in his sight;
Jesus died for all the little children of the world.

Jesus rose for all the children,
All the children of the world;
Red and yellow, black and white,
They are precious in his sight;
Jesus rose for all the little children of the world.

Jesus wants the little children,
To be careful what they do;
Honor father, mother dear
Keep their hearts so full of cheer;
Then he'll take them home to glory by and by.

Books of the New Testament

Matthew, Mark, Luke and John,

Acts and the letter to the Romans,

First and Second Corinthians, Galatians and Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, First and Second
Thessalonians, First and Second Timothy, Titus and Philemon, Hebrews, James, First and Second
Peter,

First and Second and Third John, Jude and Revelation.

BIBLE STORIES

Over half of the Bible is made up of stories of men and women who served God. Here is a list of Bible stories that you can read with your children that will capture their imagination and help them develop a love for the Bible even at a young age.

Creation	Genesis 1-2
Adam and Eve	Genesis 1-3
Noah and the Flood	Genesis 6-9
Promise to Abraham	Genesis 12, 18, 21
God cares for Joseph	Genesis 37, 39-47
A Baby Called Moses	Exodus 1-2
Sampson	Judges 13-16
David and Goliath	1 Samuel 17
Daniel in Lion's Den	Daniel 1,2, & 6
Birth of Jesus	Luke 2:1-20

RECOMMENDED READING

Here is a list of recommended reading that will help you find additional resources that will make your faith come alive in the home.

Bibles

My First Holy Bible, New Living Translation, (Tyndale, 2005).

The Adventure Bible for Early Readers, New International Reader's Version, (Zonderkidz, 2000, 2008).

ESV Children's Bible, English Standard Version, (Crossway, 2005).

Bible Storybooks

Baby's First Bible, The First Bible Collection, (Reader's Digest, 1996).

A Bible Alphabet by Alison Brown, (The Banner of Truth Trust, 2007).

Read-Aloud Bible Stories, 4 volumes, by Ella K Lindvall (Moody Press, 1982, 1985, 1990, 1995).

The Big Picture Story Bible by David Helm (Crossway, 2004).

The Toddler's ABC Bible Storybook and *A Toddler's 123 Bible Storybook* by Carolyn Larsen (Crossway, 2007, 2008).

365 Bible Stories for Young Hearts, (Crossway, 2006).

The Jesus Storybook Bible: Every story whispers his name, by Sally Lloyd-Jones (Zondervan, 2007).

The Life of Jesus For the Very Young by Isobel Tallach, (The Banner of Truth Trust, 1982).

This is No Fairy Tale by Dale Tolmasoff, (Crossway, 2005).

The Golden Children's Bible, (Golden Books, 1969, 2006).

The Child's Story Bible by Catherine Vos, (6th edition, Eerdmans, 2004).

Herein is Love: A Commentary Series for Children, From Paradise to Promise Land: Genesis-Joshua, volumes 1-6, by Nancy E. Ganz, (Shepherd Press, 2006).

Beginner Catechisms

My 1st Book of Questions and Answers by Carine MacKenzie (Christian Focus, 2001).

The Big Book of Questions and Answers: A Family Devotional Guide to the Christian Faith by Sinclair B. Ferguson (Christian Focus, 1997).

Truth and Grace Memory Books, volumes 1-3, by Thomas K. Ascol, (Founders Press, 2005)—catechism and Scripture memory for ages 2-18

Bible Memory

My ABC Bible Verses: Hiding God's Word in Little Hearts by Susan Hunt. (Crossway, 1998).

Hide the Word: Scripture Memory Songs, Volumes 1-8, by Mark Altrogge (Forever Grateful Music).

Truth and Grace Memory Book, volumes 1-3, by Thomas K. Ascol, (Founders Press, 2005).

Family Worship

The Family Worship Book: A Resource Book for Family Devotions by Terry L. Johnson, (Christian Focus, 2003).

Raising Children to Adore God: Instilling a Lifelong Passion for Worship by Patrick Kavanaugh, (Chosen Books, 2003).

Family Worship, In the Bible, in History & in Your Home by Donald S. Whitney, (Center for Biblical Spirituality, 2006).